

Photo special: Players pick their
PLAYERS OF THE YEAR!
SHOOT! 15p

8th APRIL,
1978

West Ham defender
Frank Lampard (right)
closely marks West
Brom's Scottish
international winger
Willie Johnston.

IN COLOUR
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FOCUS ON JOHN MAHONEY
Middlesbrough



Tony Woodcock of Nottingham Forest with his Young Player of the Year award.

The professional footballers PLAYERS OF

**at a
star-studded
night at
the London
Hilton**



P.F.A. Chairman Derek Dougan. In the foreground is Guest Speaker Brian Walsh, Q.C., whose jokes helped make the night a memorable one.



Coventry City director Joe Mercer deep in soccer chat on the top table.



Charlton & England 'B' striker Mike Flanagan with SHOOT's Assistant-Editor Peter Stewart.



Ipswich captain Mick Mills, away from the pressure of the F.A. Cup Semis.



Everton striker Bob Latchford with sports writer Bob Harris enjoy their meal.



Newcastle United boss Bill McGarry forgets his First Division relegation problems — for a while.



Brendon Batson, West Brom's black defender signed from Cambridge United.

ALL-STAR TEAM — FIRST DIVISION

Peter Shilton (Nottm. For.)
John Gidman (Aston Villa)
Derek Statham (W.B.A.)
Liam Brady (Arsenal)
Gordon McQueen (Leeds, now Man. Utd.)

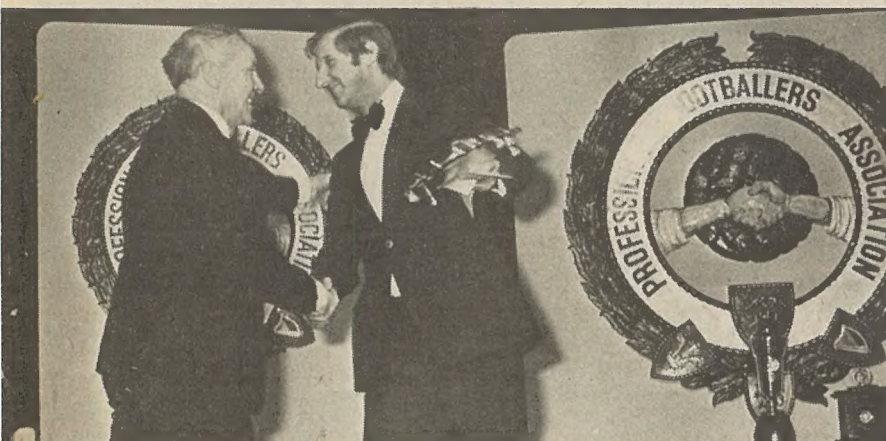
Martin Buchan (Man. Utd.)
Steve Coppell (Man. Utd.)
Trevor Francis (Birmingham)
Joe Jordan (Leeds, now Man. Utd.)
Trevor Brooking (West Ham)
John Robertson (Nottm. For.)

ALL-STAR TEAM — SECOND DIVISION

Barry Daines (Tottenham)
Terry Naylor (Tottenham)
Ken Sansom (C. Palace)
Glenn Hoddle (Tottenham)
Paul Jones (Bolton)
Paul Fitcher (Luton)

Alan Ball (Southampton)
Peter Ward (Brighton)
John Duncan (Tottenham)
Peter Reid (Bolton)
Peter Taylor (Tottenham)

honour their THE YEAR



Former Liverpool manager Bill Shankly receives his special merit award for services to football from Scotland boss Ally MacLeod.



Players' Player of the Year — Forest 'keeper Peter Shilton. The trophy is in the safe hands of a worthy winner.



International managers . . . Mike Smith (Wales) and Ron Greenwood (England) exchange views and news. Man in the middle is SHOOT's John Pyke.



Striker Chris Garland of Bristol City chats with his former Leicester City team-mate Steve Kember.



Ipswich boss Bobby Robson makes a point to former Liverpool super star Ian St. John.



Wolverhampton Wanderers' striker John Richards in a relaxed mood.



1973 Players' Player of the Year Norman Hunter, not bitin' legs.

ALL-STAR TEAM — THIRD DIVISION

Dai Davies (Wrexham)
Brendon Batson (Cambridge Utd, now West Brom)
Keith Kennedy (Bury)
Ian Ross (Peterborough)
Chris Turner (Peterborough)

Mike Thomas (Wrexham)
Bobby Shinton (Wrexham)
Alan Buckley (Walsall)
Dixie McNeil (Wrexham)
David Kemp (P'mouth, now Carlisle)
David Moss (Swindon)

ALL-STAR TEAM — FOURTH DIVISION

Peter Springett (Barnsley)
Chris Lawler (Stockport)
Keith Pritchett (Watford)
Roger Joslyn (Watford)
Sam Ellis (Watford)
Mike McCarthy (Barnsley)

Ian Miller (Doncaster)
Robbie James (Swansea)
Alan Curtis (Swansea)
Brendan O'Callaghan (Doncaster, now Stoke)
Alan Mayes (Watford)

We preview the game which could see England's promising Under-21 side reach the U.E.F.A. Semi-Final

ENGLAND MUST RELY ON BRAIN, NOT BRAWN

ON A partisan night in Rome on Wednesday, April 5th, Dave Sexton's England Under-21 team face the most severe challenge to their 100 per cent record.

Sexton's "Babes" take on the Italian Under-21 side in the return leg of the match won 2-1 by England at Maine Road on March 8th. With away goals counting double in this U.E.F.A. competition, and the Italian opposition undoubtedly the strongest yet faced, England will need all their courage and footballing skills to maintain their fine run which has brought run-away victories over Norway by 6-0 and Finland by 8-1.

At Maine Road the Norwegian

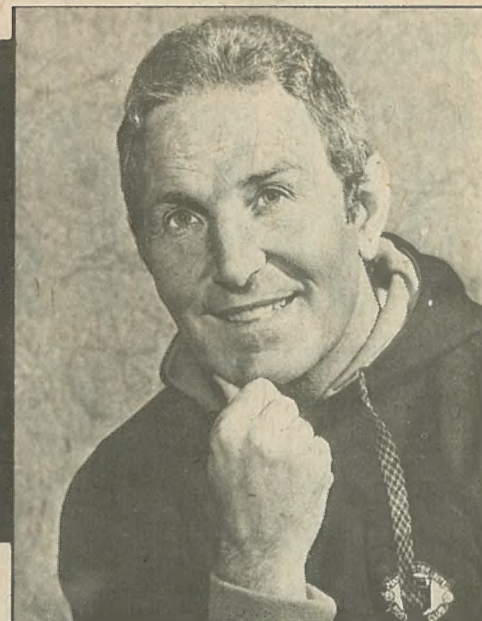
referee Rolf Nyhus was considered by some observers to have been lenient in merely booking three of the Italians. England certainly kept their cool remarkably well, only Manchester City's Gary Owen succumbing to the urge to retaliate after a particularly nasty foul by Di Bartolomei.

The temptation for the return leg might be for England to place the emphasis on hard, defensive play, using the kind of players capable of looking after themselves when the going gets tough.

But Sexton has built an exciting and talented team and is unlikely to swap them for more physically-minded selections.

MANAGER
DAVE
SEXTON:

'A
FASCINATING
BATTLE OF
TACTICS'



Indeed, the game in Manchester underlined the emerging talents of such players as Glenn Hoddle of Spurs, Laurie Cunningham of West Bromwich, Peter Barnes of Manchester City and Tony Woodcock, the Nottingham Forest "find" of the season, who scored both the goals.

The Italians, too, are capable of producing exciting skilful football and are by no means all given to violent behaviour. The goal scored by winger Salvatore Bagri which gave the Italians the lead was a perfect example of their ability to score quickly on the break. The ball

which Paolo Rossi laid on for Bagri was the first warning English opponents had received of his talents.

Rossi is the leading scorer in the Italian League this season and is already rated around two million pounds. Moreover, he has been tipped by some good judges as the new Cruyff.

How does Sexton see the match?

"I know it will be hard but I'm looking forward to it tremendously," he declares. "When you play an Italian side at any level it is always a fascinating battle of tactics, particularly when you play over two legs.

"The boys did well at Maine Road and I know we all learned things that are going to make the second-leg a completely different game. Obviously the Italians are going to play it a different way and it is my job and Terry Venables' job to try and anticipate what they are going to do.

"We have our ideas, but of course we're going to keep them between us and the players.

'Team Spirit'

"I can promise English soccer fans the lads will not be giving less than 105 per cent. They've been together now for quite a few games and have created team spirit themselves.

"And because of that, although winning in Italy is one of the hardest achievements any team can have ahead of them, anybody who writes England off is just underestimating the players. I'm not."

The England defenders will need no reminding that players of Rossi's gifts must be kept under tight control. Given just a foot of space, they are always liable to turn a game in Italy's favour.

Having said that, Young Player of the Year, Tony Woodcock is the sort of forward who can also break through any defensive system and is especially dangerous in break-aways.

In recent months we have grown accustomed to reading that Scotland will need to keep calm under intimidation in Argentina this summer. England's Under-21 players in Rome must set out to do the same. If they succeed, they will be well on the way to a place in the Semi-Finals v Hungary or Yugoslavia.



England's Viv Anderson manages to cross the ball despite the close attention of Italy's Galbiati during the first-leg clash at Maine Road.

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The ball on the left is stitched leather. It costs around £20.

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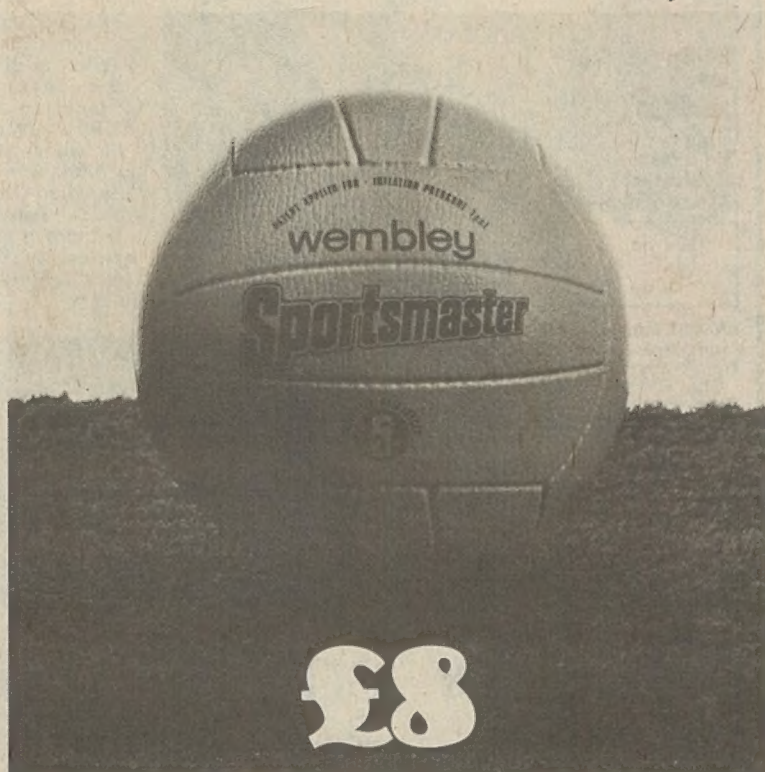
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'HONESTY—BEST POLICY FOR SPURS'



CREWE Alexandra's physiotherapy room can now be likened to that of a First Division club — thanks to a gift.

The widow of former physio Jack Such donated around £3,000 worth of equipment to the club.

Mrs Gladys Such did not know what to do with the gear and finally decided the Gresty Road club would benefit from it. She said: "Jack would have liked that."

Secretary Ken Dove added: "It was a marvellous gesture. There was no other way a club at Crewe's level would have been able to look at equipment of this quality."

Medal for Terry

IF hot favourites Linfield win the Irish League title this term, then Luton Town newcomer Terry Hayes will still pick up a Championship medal.

The Belfast club have guaranteed talented Terry, who appeared in 15 successive games of the 22-match programme, a League medal, even though he is now resident at Kenilworth Road.

At 18, stylish defender Hayes looks a brilliant prospect and may soon be making an impact in Division Two with The Hatters, and challenging Arsenal's Sammy Nelson for the left-back berth in the full Northern Ireland team.

Capped eight times at youth level and included in his country's squad for the recent Under-21 away friendly v. Eire, teenager Hayes won Ulster Cup, Antrim Shield and Irish F.A. Youth Cup medals while at Windsor Park.

Now he's hoping for that promised League medal!

● Terry Hayes's cross-Channel departure was forecast in "News Desk", in the Feb. 18 issue of SHOOT!

THE form of striker Paul Randall for Bristol Rovers has attracted much attention — but he isn't the only ace in Rovers' young attacking pack.

Chipping Sodbury-born Steve White is another youngster who looks likely to develop into something special.

An England schoolboy international and a Gloucestershire Youth player, Steve has many neat touches and plenty of heart. He has won honours for cross-country running so he rarely has bellows to mend when it comes to soccer.

TARGET for several top English clubs — including Aston Villa, Coventry, West Brom and Manchester United — is Dumbarton's young midfielder Murdo McLeod.

IF there's one quality a footballer likes his manager to have it's honesty.

So when Tottenham defender Don McAllister read numerous reports the club were trying to buy Leeds centre-half Gordon McQueen to take over from him, he was obviously grateful to manager Keith Burkinshaw (left) who called him in to explain the reasons.

Burkinshaw told Don whenever a world-class player like McQueen became available Spurs had to be interested, and it was no reflection on his own performances.

Ironically it was McAllister who headed Spurs' equaliser in a 2-2 draw with Blackpool the following day.

Even so, Burkinshaw pointed out it was probably Don's inability to cope with Mickey Walsh in the air that led to Blackpool's second goal.

Burkinshaw said: "Don understood my reasons for trying to sign McQueen and I hope he respected me for explaining them."

"I believe it is the right way of doing things. It hurts me when I have to leave players out, particularly when they have been giving everything for the club. But I always tell them why they are dropped."

If more managers were as honest and straightforward as the Tottenham boss, perhaps there would be fewer transfer requests from disgruntled players.

TWO 16-year-olds helped Second Division Queen's Park create one of the major upsets in this season's Scottish Cup competition when the Glasgow amateur side beat Motherwell 3-1 at Fir Park.

The average age of the Hampden team is 20, but the two "boys" are right-back Ian Aitken and outside-right Derek Wood. Aitken, in fact, is still a pupil at Paisley Grammar School where Queen's Park coach Joe Gilroy is a physical education teacher.

KEVIN Fitzpatrick has served Limerick for 21 years and made his 700th League of Ireland appearance recently.

ONE player on the mend is Jimmy Brown (below) of Hearts. The club's longest-serving player, who broke a leg against Kilmarnock on November 5th last year, is back in training and determined to play his part in Hearts' run-in towards promotion.

The double fracture to Brown's leg has healed remarkably well and he's waiting to get the green light before starting light training.



NEWS DESK

COMPILED BY PETER STEWART

SCOTTISH POST FOR HAGART

FORMER Hearts boss and now Motherwell coach, John Hagart, has been appointed assistant-manager to Scotland's World Cup squad. The appointment brings to an end an incredible year for one of the best-liked men in Scottish football.

A year ago John's football career appeared to have been eclipsed when he lost his job at Tynecastle after Hearts were relegated from the Premier Division. He returned to the building trade until Motherwell offered him a coaching post at Fir Park. About the same time he was asked to take charge of Scotland's Under-21 team.

So impressed was Scotland's manager Ally MacLeod that the big man has appointed John as his right-hand man on a part-time basis. The post covers the three British Championship matches against England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the World Cup Finals in Argentina.

Says John: "What a year it has been. I'm absolutely delighted."



MORTON recently stepped up their promotion challenge by signing Jimmy Miller, the Motherwell midfield player, for £10,000, which manager Benny Rooney described as "a realistic price."

Morton had been on a player hunt since selling Mark McGhee (left) to Newcastle for £150,000, and it seemed every Scottish club wanted a share of that money when Rooney made inquiries about players.

Most of the McGhee cash, however, will go towards covering the losses made by the Greenock club in recent years.

Miller began his senior career with Leicester City then joined Aberdeen. They released him and he signed for Queen of the South who sold him to Motherwell last season for £12,000.

HAVING failed to land Gordon McQueen, you can take it Glasgow Rangers are watching Birmingham City's Jimmy Calderwood. In a recent Focus feature in SHOOT, he named his favourite other side as... Glasgow Rangers.

FORMER Chelsea star Barry Bridges, who recently resigned as player-manager of St. Patrick's Athletic, has stayed on in Eire after all and moved west to Sligo Rovers.

Billy Sinclair is expected to leave the Showgrounds when his contract expires in June and Bridges could well take over.

GARY Mills, son of former Northampton Town soccer player Roly Mills, has scored a double. He has played soccer for England schoolboys at Wembley and rugby for England schoolboys at Twickenham.

He intends to stick with football, though, and is on the books of Nottingham Forest.

Chasing the same double is Gary Leonard, an apprentice with Northampton. He'll make it, too!

ROGER Hynd is the only manager North of the border to have been involved this season in both the English F.A. Cup and Scottish Cup.

He appeared for Third Division Walsall in the early rounds, and since taking over as manager of Premier Division side Motherwell he has transformed the club.

BURNLEY are hoping that they have another outstanding youngster in 18-year-old midfielder Stuart Robertson.

Stuart, who joined the Turf Moor club straight from school after winning honours for Scotland against England, Ireland, Wales, West Germany and France, has been showing some impressive form.

His biggest thrill at schoolboy level came when he starred in the Scotland team which beat England at Wembley.

'DEADLINE' TRANSFERS

Peter Allen
Terry Austin
Steve Baines
Terry Beasley
Peter Burke
John Burridge
Micky Buttress
John Craven
Gordon Davies
John Delves
Peter Fox
Colin Garwood
Garry Gillespie
Alan Gowling
Paul Hart
Brian Hornsby
Jack Howarth
David Hunt
Tyrone James
David Kemp
John Lathan
Alec Lindsay
Denis Martin
Mick Moore
Bob Mountford
Jon Nixon
Brendan O'Callaghan
Steve Perrin
Bill Rafferty
Gordon Sweetzer
Charlie Young

(Orient to Millwall)
(Plymouth to Walsall)
(Huddersfield to Bradford C.)
(Trowbridge to Cardiff)
(Barnsley to Halifax)
(Aston Villa to Crystal Palace)
(Aston Villa to Gillingham)
(Plymouth to Vancouver Whitecaps)
(Merthyr T. to Fulham)
(Plymouth to Exeter)
(Sheff. Wed. to Stoke)
(Colchester to Portsmouth)
(Falkirk to Coventry)
(Newcastle to Bolton)
(Blackpool to Leeds)
(Shrewsbury to Sheff. Wed.)
(Bournemouth to Southport)
(Derby Co. to Notts Co.)
(Fulham to Plymouth)
(Portsmouth to Carlisle)
(Carlisle to Portsmouth)
(Stoke to Oakland (U.S.))
(Newcastle to Mansfield)
(Wigan A. to Port Vale)
(Huddersfield to Halifax)
(Shrewsbury to Barnsley)
(Doncaster to Stoke)
(Crystal Pal. to Plymouth)
(Carlisle to Wolves)
(Brentford to Cambridge)
(Aston Villa to Gillingham)

ROMFORD, the Southern League club without a home ground — they are still waiting to have a new one completed in the area following the closure of Brooklands for development last summer — are still going strong and well in line for promotion to the Premier Division.

The team's tremendous record this season is a fine tribute to manager Dave Bickles, the former West Ham, Crystal Palace and Colchester centre-half.

Perhaps one or two League clubs, in the hunt for a young boss with ideas, should cast more than one glance in Romford's direction.

WEST BROM will make English Soccer history at the end of the season when they become the first Football League club to play in China.

Albion have accepted an invitation to visit the People's Republic between the 13th and 27th May.

They will play against Chinese teams in special matches to take place in Peking, Shanghai and Canton.

LEICESTER youngster Trevor Christie, a great Paul McCartney and Wings fan, has plenty to sing about himself.

The 19-year-old Cresswell-born striker has already shown impressive form at League level, playing extremely well when making his League debut in the victory over Wolves.

Trevor has many neat touches, is strong in the air and lacks nothing when it comes to courage.

● **Armagh-born former Northern Ireland Schoolboy international full-back Raymond Hill** recently made his Irish League debut for Portadown.

The promising 16-year-old, latest in a long line of Portadown "discoveries", joined the Shamrock Park outfit at the start of this term, and looks set for a bright future in the game.

DERBY County manager Tommy Docherty is never one to mince his words, so his quote after Derby had drawn 1-1 at the Baseball Ground against Newcastle United was vintage Doc. "Most crowds are worth a goal start to a team — ours is as good as an own-goal."



£300 football

A football autographed by the Barcelona players, including the great Johan Cruyff, realised an astonishing £300 for Ipswich Town footballer Mick Lambert (centre) at his testimonial sportsmen's dinner recently.

The money was raised from an auction conducted by Ipswich manager Bobby Robson. The bidding started at £25, but after 20 minutes of tense rivalry it was finally knocked down to Sudbury businessman Brian Hobbs (left) and his brother Roger.

"Unbelievable," was all the lucky Lambert could comment.

Last year, at a similar dinner for Colin Viljoen, a ball signed by the England players realised £56.

FALKIRK'S 17-year-old captain, Garry Gillespie, has signed for Coventry. The move cost The Sky Blues £75,000 — £25,000 of which will be paid after Gillespie, a defender, has made ten first team appearances for Coventry.

When Gillespie was appointed Falkirk's captain before the New Year he became the youngest captain in senior British football. English clubs first started showing an interest in the youngster when he was with the Scottish international youth squad.

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STAN LOVER,
President of
the London
Referees' Society

1



A player deliberately butts an opponent. Do you award (a) an indirect free-kick for dangerous play, (b) a direct free-kick or (c) a direct free-kick and dismiss the offender?

2

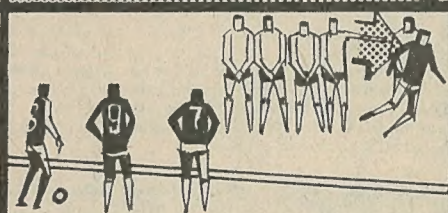
A: Standing outside the field, near his own goal, a sub. distracts an opposing player just before the ball is kicked into the goal. After awarding a goal do you (a) take no action against the sub or (b) caution him?



B: A defender covers the ball within playing distance, when it is rolling towards the goal-line for a goal-kick. An attacker charges him in the back just before the ball goes out of play. Do you (a) award a goal-kick, or (b) a direct free-kick?



C: An attacker lines up in a defending wall in the penalty-area. A defender objects and pushes the attacker just before the ball is kicked into the hands of the goalkeeper. Do you (a) take no action, or (b) caution the defender and have the free-kick retaken?



ANSWERS . . .

1. This is an act of Serious Foul Play. Dismissal and a direct free-kick (c) is the correct action. 2A: Although the sub is not on the field he may be cautioned, as any other player, for ungentlemanly conduct (b). B: Award a direct free-kick (b) for charging in a dangerous manner. C: Caution the defender and have the free-kick retaken (b).

GOAL-LINES

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When writing to us please mention the two features you
liked best in the latest issue of SHOOT!

This week's Star Letter comes from Neil Edwards of Rugeley in Staffs., who wins our Special Prize of £3. He writes:

DIXIE AND ALAN — A MYSTERY

I DON'T know how Dixie McNeil (Wrexham) and Alan Buckley (Walsall) have failed to reach Division One.

Their goalscoring records prove they can score regularly. Dixie has scored around 200 goals during his career, topping the Goal List on two occasions while he was with Hereford. As I write, the Wrexham striker is again leading the way with 27 goals.

Alan Buckley has just signed a nine-year contract with Walsall and has an equally impressive record.

He is the only present-day player to have scored 20 or more in five successive seasons.

I think it's a crying shame these two marvellous professionals have not had the chance to prove themselves in Division One.

● When I think of some players who have been given the opportunity at the highest level, it does indeed seem unusual that no one has taken a chance — if it would be a chance — with Dixie and Alan. Still, Wrexham and Walsall will be delighted no big club has so far made a decisive move for them!



Celebrations for Dixie after Wrexham had defeated Blyth in the F.A. Cup.

Wrong Tactics...

AS a keen admirer of British football, I'm glad to see Ron Greenwood and Dave Sexton in charge of the two major England sides. They are certainly the best men for their jobs.

Even so, I feel they are making a mistake by playing 4-2-4 formations. It isn't necessary to field four strikers. By doing so you weaken the midfield where games are won and lost.

If your midfielders aren't in command, the goals won't come. Remember, Revie played four strikers against Finland — and scored two goals. Italy played two strikers — and thrashed the Finns for six!

I'm convinced that with three midfield men England would have scored more than two goals against my country at Wembley.

If you don't have the bullets — you can't shoot!

ANGELO PREZIOTTI,
CANNARA, ITALY.

● It's not really a 4-2-4 formation. Peter Barnes is the only direct winger, while on the other flank Steve Coppell doubles as a midfield-man. Barnes also does his share of grafting so 4-2-4 can become 4-4-2 very quickly. Personally, I think Greenwood and Sexton are on the right lines and this time next year people could have a very different opinion of England.

... Rough Tactics

I'M sick and tired of the Italian style of play. Whenever I see

them they commit themselves to stopping the opposition at all costs.

Not just at international level, but club level. Surely, with so much class, they don't need to resort to these tactics?

QUENTIN LACEY,
LYMINGTON.

● I think their current manager, Enzo Bearzot, has the right approach and, slowly but surely, is trying to get the Italians out of their bad habits. But Rome wasn't built in a day . . . or even a season.

Alan's Crystal Ball

WHILE reading through a back issue of SHOOT (5th October, 1974) I came across an article by Alan Ball.

He was raving about an Arsenal youngster called Graham Rix, saying he had so much talent it was frightening.

Nobody really knew about Graham then, three and a half years ago . . . but everyone knows him now!

NEIL PEARCE,
FORMBY.

● Seems like Ballie knows a good 'un when he sees him.

Pen-Pal

I'M a 13-year-old Swedish boy and I support Manchester United. I'd like to write to boys and girls in England.

HANS-OVE OLSSON,
HANSJO 6515,
79400 ORSA,
SWEDEN.

It's the big-kick-off time in soccer in the States, where A winning team can collect 9 points!

DENNIS Tueart's move from Manchester City has proved the American game is capable of attracting the top British players, and not just those who have failed to make it here or are well past their peak.

That's been the case previously. But no one can deny Tueart is one of the best English players of the moment and his decision to cross the Atlantic will worry a lot of Football League clubs.

If it's good enough for Tueart, it may prove good enough for many more top players. And there is no way their English clubs can compete with the kind of money the players will be offered to play in the North American Soccer League.

The new season kicks-off on April 1st, and it's likely to be the most successful in America's short soccer history.

The game first started there 11 years ago but looked like dying on its feet in 1969 when only four clubs competed. This season there'll be a record 24 — and there were plenty of others who wanted to get in.

Cosmos are the most glamorous club in the States. As well as Tueart, they've got Franz Beckenbauer, the ex-West Germany skipper and Italian Giorgio Chinaglia. They won the title last season and were also the best supported side with an average gate of over 34,000. They're managed by former Charlton manager Eddie Firmani, who has one of the most enviable managing jobs in football

with an almost limitless budget for players.

The New Jersey club are bound to make another strong bid for the Championship, but they're going to have some strong rivalry on the East Coast this summer.

Ex-Newcastle boss Richard Dinis has been appointed manager of Philadelphia Fury, a new club joint-owned by pop stars Mick Jagger, Peter Frampton and Rick Wakeman. And they'll have some glamorous names on the pitch as well.

Johnny Giles, late of West Brom, will be their midfield inspiration. Peter Osgood, late of Chelsea and Southampton, will be up-front for them, and Alan Ball is also due to fly out to give them a hand.

North of New York, the Cosmos will have to compete with New England Tea Men, managed by former Coventry and Peterborough manager Noel Cantwell. They could have England B striker Mike Flanagan playing for them under an exchange worked out with Charlton. But they're another new club and will probably need time to find their feet.

Cosmos' biggest challengers for the title are likely to be Firmani's old club Tampa Bay Rowdies. Gordon Jago, a candidate for the England manager's job at one time, has taken over there and it's his second spell in the States so he knows what it's all about. Rodney Marsh is their star, and there's more British influence in Paul Hammond, formerly of Palace, and striker Derek Smethurst.

George Best has been involved in a tug-of-war between Fulham and Los Angeles Aztecs, but if he plays for the West Coast club again, they're bound to be fancied runners. Norwich goalkeeper Kevin Keelan has also agreed to play for them this season, which should improve their defensive record.

Sixteen of the 24 clubs have British managers or coaches. Apart from the ones already mentioned, there's Eddie McCreadie at new club Memphis Rogues, John Sewell at California Surf, Dave Clements at Caribous of Colorado, Ron Newman at Fort Lauderdale, Don Megson at Portland Timbers, Malcolm Musgrove (coach) at Chicago Sting and Tony Waiters at Vancouver Whitecaps. Phil Parkes of Q.P.R. and Kevin Hector of Derby will play for the latter.

Ken Furphy is in charge at Detroit Express, the new club formed by, among others, Jimmy Hill. Freddie Goodwin, who used to manage Birmingham City, is with Minnesota Kicks, whom he took to runners-up in the 1976 season and who get crowds of over 32,000. Geoff Barnett, ex-Arsenal, plays for them, and so does Ade Coker (ex-West Ham). Ron Futch of Luton is also due to sign.

The other British bosses are Bill Foulkes, in charge of the unfortunately-named Tulsa Roughnecks, Gordon Bradley (ex-Sunderland) at Washington, and Jimmy Gabriel at Seattle Sounders. Former Spurs players Mike

England and Jimmy Robertson are on the Seattle playing staff and Colin Boulton will keep goal for the Roughnecks.

This season, there will be six regional Divisions in the NASL, with the top two sides in each going through to the play-offs in August, as well as two "wild cards" — clubs with good records.

There's no such thing as relegation in American soccer and even though the teams are split into Divisions based on geographical location, they still play clubs from different Divisions in other parts of the country.

British fans might be confused to hear that sides in the States can get NINE points for a win. They actually get six points for victory but there is a bonus point for every goal scored up to a maximum of three.

They don't like a "non result" and as for those score draws, the lifeblood of the English pools, there are no such things in the States. If the game is level after 90 minutes, the teams play "sudden death" extra-time of seven and a half minutes each way. The first to score wins.

If it's still level after that, the points are decided by a "shoot out". This is like the system of ending European ties with penalties, except the players get the ball 35 yards out and can either shoot direct or try and dribble round the 'keeper. There's another reason for the 35-yard line on American pitches. There's no offside once attacking players are inside it!

The Cosmos players celebrate a goal during last term's Championship winning season.



**DAVID
FAIRCLOUGH**
Liverpool and
England 'B'



SHOOT!

GORDON HILL
Manchester Utd.



SHOOT!

CAN MIKE LIFT ROCKY ROCHDALE FROM 92ND SPOT?

JUST 12 miles separate Manchester United and Rochdale football clubs, but they are planets apart when it comes to status and opportunities in our League football.

When impassive Dave Sexton was proudly presenting at Manchester his latest investment — half-a-million pounds centre-half Gordon McQueen — to a clamouring media, at Rochdale, cheery Mike Ferguson was wrestling with the problem of rescuing "The Dale" from their entrenched position at the foot of the Fourth Division.

When your team is 92nd in the Football League it can get inextricably caught up in the quicksand of bad results, loss of confidence, poor gates and diminishing funds.

Seventh from bottom when the last season ended and right at the bottom for most of this season, the morale of the players needed some lifting when Ferguson took over in November. "Loss of confidence" would have been an understatement at that time.

"The players were in such a state when I came here," said Ferguson, "they were mentally fatigued and depressed because there was nothing going for them at all. They needed concern for their welfare and where they were in the League."

The likeable Ferguson, a popular guy at Blackburn, Aston Villa, Q.P.R. and Cambridge as a player, restored some faith in the team right from the off and they had a little bit of a run of five games without losing.

Then Fate slapped them down again with broken legs (to Alan Tarbuck and Ian Seddon) in successive matches.

The loss of these two valuable players on top of other injuries meant that for six or seven weeks Ferguson could only call upon 12 players. As a result, two apprentices — just 16 years-of-age — became regular members.

The scratch side did not let Ferguson down. "Their attitude has been first class throughout," Ferguson stressed.

"They've gone out to train or play with the right frame of mind but not got the results that they deserved. It has been so ridiculous! They've played so well in many games and got nothing out of them!"

Changes will have to be made to the side for them to attain something, but how do you attract players to the lowest-placed club in the League? To break even, the club needs about 3,500 people through the turnstiles each game, but figures are nearer 1,200.

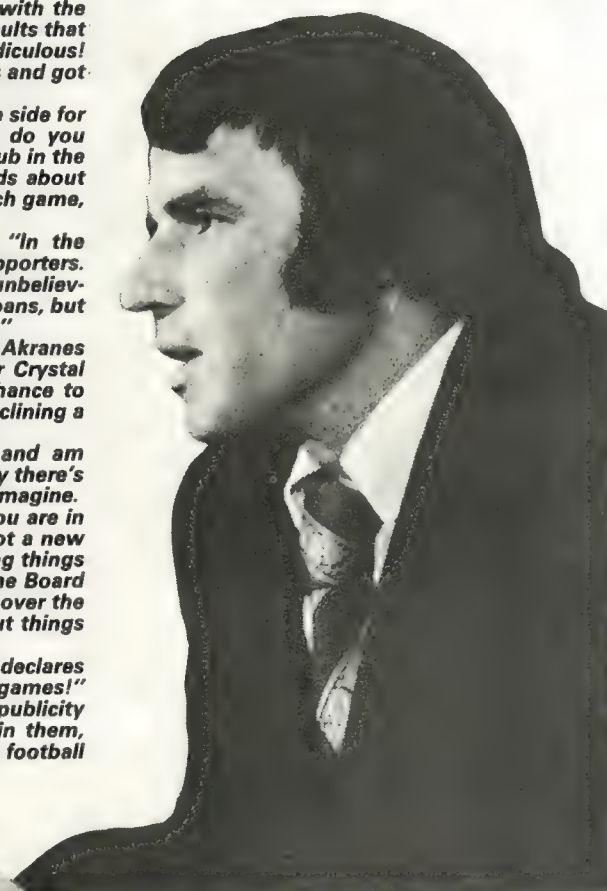
But Ferguson values those 1,200. "In the circumstances they are fantastic supporters. Since I've been here they have been unbelievable . . . they have their moans and groans, but they are entitled to them aren't they?"

After six months with Icelandic club Akranes and scouting back in this country for Crystal Palace, Mike Ferguson leapt at the chance to join Rochdale even though it meant declining a coaching offer from the First Division.

"I wanted to be in management and am grateful for the chance here. Potentially there's more at this club than people might imagine."

"Things always look worse when you are in the position we are in, but we have got a new Commercial Manager, so we are hoping things are going to start right that side . . . the Board are great . . . they've put up with a lot over the years . . . and, of course, I've got to put things right on the field."

Ferguson is sure of his ability. He declares "When we get a full squad we will win games!" When that happens they will get the publicity they deserve, players will want to join them, gates increase . . . it's the logic of our football which drives on clubs like Rochdale.



Men in the hot-seats. Mike Ferguson (above, right) at Rochdale and Alan Mullery (below) at Brighton. Billy Bingham (below, right) is in charge at Mansfield.



MANSFIELD won the Third Division Championship last season for the first time in their history with Brighton pegged into second place.

Yet this season it is Brighton who are pushing hard for promotion to the First while Mansfield are fighting a desperate battle to avoid dropping straight back to the Third.

Why? There are a number of reasons but one factor seems to override all others — money. Whilst Brighton have spent freely

over the last year to consolidate their challenge for promotion, Mansfield have been forced to sell.

Two seasons ago, with a pressing debt of £90,000, the Field Mill club were forced to accept £80,000 from Dutch club Sparta Rotterdam for top scorer Ray Clarke. Although that transfer enabled Mansfield to survive and win promotion, they must be kicking themselves when they hear Clarke is rated at £240,000 by Sparta.

Now, with an annual wage bill of

Q: WHY ARE CHAMPIONS MANSFIELD STRUGGLING — AND RUNNERS-UP BRIGHTON BOOMING?

A: MONEY!

£100,000 and gates of under 10,000, they are struggling again.

On the other hand, Brighton's is a rags-to-riches tale. With gates averaging over 22,000 and recent ground improvements drawing even greater support to the Goldstone Ground, they are able to repay the loyalty of the supporters with the possibility of First Division football next season.

Since the end of last season manager Alan Mullery has spent more than £500,000 on Teddy Maybank from Fulham for £200,000, Peter Sayer (Cardiff) for £100,000, Mark Lawrenson (Preston) for £100,000, Malcolm Poskett (Hartlepool) for £60,000, Graham Moseley (Derby) £20,000 and Gary Williams from Preston for £20,000.

Yet not so long ago Brighton were struggling with a massive £400,000 debt which threatened the future of the club. Luckily, Brighton's geographical position helps, Mansfield's hinders.

Where Mansfield have the unenviable task of attempting to draw support from the Nottingham

clubs — Forest and County — and Derby, Brighton have no opposition along the South coast nearer than Portsmouth.

Hardly surprising then Alan Mullery, with his tremendous tactical experience, is enjoying such success in his first managerial job. With ample financial resources, his future looks assured.

By comparison, ex-Mansfield boss Peter Morris found himself no longer able to manage a club on a shoestring, and reluctantly resigned in order to become assistant-manager to Bill McGarry at Newcastle.

Billy Bingham, one-time boss of affluent Everton, must now face life at the other end of the financial scale. As newly-appointed successor to Morris he attempts to perform a minor miracle by keeping Mansfield in Division Two next season.

A club is only as good as its last match . . . and for very different reasons Brighton and Mansfield will be hoping they get good results in the run-in to the end of the season.

Why Albion picked Big Ron...

RON Atkinson had no fears about leaving Cambridge United and moving into the big time with West Bromwich Albion.

When Albion — looking for a manager to replace Saudi Arabia bound Ronnie Allen — moved in for Atkinson, he accepted their offer like a shot.

It was easy to see why Big Ron topped the list of the men Albion fancied. For he had an impressive record in six years as a manager.

The first three — after he finished a long playing career with Oxford — were spent in charge of Southern League Kettering.

He steered them to two League Championships and one fourth place, statistics that impressed Cambridge enough to offer him the manager's job at the Abbey Stadium.

Atkinson spent a season and a half re-organising and re-shaping a side who had dropped back into the Fourth Division just before his arrival.

Last season they swept impressively to the Fourth Division title and when Ron left them in January to move on to West Bromwich, Cambridge were lying second in the Third Division — the highest place in their history.

"I had some great times at Cambridge and the club will always mean something special to me," said the 38-year-old Atkinson.

"But the First Division is the only place to be and when Albion offered me their manager's job I had to take it.

"I never played in the First Division — but don't see that as any thing of a handicap.

"After all, people like Dave Sexton, Malcolm Allison, Mike Smith and Lawrie McMenemy did not play there either. And they have not done too badly as managers, have they?

"I always believed I was destined to become manager of a First Division club. And if that sounds boastful forgive me — it's not meant to.

"My first match in charge of Albion was at Middlesbrough — and I was completely calm and self assured before it.

"That surprised me a bit. Because if you had said to me the previous week I would be taking over a First Division club I would have expected to be nervous.

"I've got definite beliefs in how the game should be played and they apply just as much in the First Division as they do in the Third or Fourth.

"I want my teams to attack, to set the other side problems and give the fans entertainment.

"I want them to get the ball into the opponents area as quickly as they can and get players forward in support.

"This is the way I did things at Cambridge, where we scored 87 goals last season and were the first to reach 50 this year.

"If that does not justify my principles then I don't know what does.

"I shall expect the same from Albion — even though it may take time to achieve it.

"They are happier building up patiently and holding the ball to try and draw the other side out. But they seem reluctant to throw it into the box in case they give it away."

Like most new managers, Ron will probably be adding some new

faces to The Hawthorns.

But his need is not desperate for he is basically happy with the squad of players he has inherited.

"There are some outstanding individual players here and the general framework of the team is sound," he says.

"I have got a great base to work from and it will be my own fault if I fail to make a go of it."



...and Luton chose David Pleat

FEW people have had a more meteoric rise to the top than Luton's new manager David Pleat.

In fact things happened so fast to thrust Pleat into the hot seat he was in a spin for days.

At Christmas he was doing an unsung job as coach to the reserves at Luton.

He was promoted to first team coach when Roy McCrohan quit to go to America — then found himself in charge after manager Harry Haslam's shock decision to join Sheffield United.

So Pleat had suddenly rocketed into prominence and, at 33, finds himself one of the youngest managers in the Football League.

He was recommended for the job by Haslam — who gave further evidence of how highly he rates Pleat by also offering him a coaching job at Bramall Lane.

Pleat, in a complete daze, asked for a few days to think things over. But within 24 hours his mind was made up.

"I knew I had to take the Luton job. I've been with the club three years and have developed a great affinity for them.

"I suppose the directors took my

record over those years into consideration.

"The Board have shown a lot of faith in me and I intend to make sure I repay them by doing well.

"I can't do the job the same way Harry did. He was never short of a wisecrack and was a tremendous public relations man.

"But I have qualities of my own and I believe I have the ability to bring Luton success."

Pleat, a former England school-boy and Youth international, is one of the most highly regarded coaches in the game.

He was bitten by the coaching bug very early and it's a side of the game that always interested him through a playing career with Forest, Luton, Shrewsbury, Exeter and Peterborough.

Pleat got his first taste of management with Southern League Nuneaton Borough, where he was in charge for three years.

Now he has been swept into power at a club who have had more than their share of problems in the past couple of years. We wish him well.



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SAMMY McIlroy approached me after training the other day with a copy of SHOOT under his arm. It was dated 18th March, when I spoke about the Scottish players in England and why I thought the likes of Joe Jordan and Gordon McQueen commanded such high fees on the current transfer market. "You've given the Jocks too many plugs in your column," Sammy accused, "especially those at United."

"It's about time you mentioned the Irish players over here. What have you got against us?"

Naturally I don't want to damage Anglo-Irish relations at Old T, so this week I'll speak about the boyos from the Emerald Isle.

Ireland has provided our Football League with so much talent over the years they deserve a special men-



'England's

tion in my column. Although, I believe SHOOT did feature England's Irish Connection sometime ago.

Four of the most famous Irishmen to play in England over the past 20 years or so are Danny Blanchflower, Derek Dougan, Johnny Giles and Georgie Best.

Danny, who skippered Spurs during their glory years of the early Sixties, is now manager of Northern Ireland, of course.

The Doog, after years of service to a host of clubs including Aston Villa, Blackburn and Wolves is still the highly respected chairman of the Professional Footballers' Association.

countrymen Dave Langan and Gerry Daly at the Baseball Ground. I believe full-back Dave arrived towards the end of Brian Clough's reign as manager, from Dublin junior club Cherry Orchard.

It's always amazed me the number of good players Ireland has produced, considering their soccer isn't that well-supported.

Other sports, such as Gaelic Football and hurling, draw larger crowds.

I asked Sammy McIlroy if he could provide an answer. He said

Johnny Giles is still going strong as manager of Shamrock Rovers and the Republic of Ireland national side and George Best needs no further introduction... except that he was without doubt one of Britain's finest-ever players.

There have been so many top class Irishmen from North and South involved in English football over the years it would take me a whole two pages of SHOOT just to name them.

So I'm sure all you Irish readers will forgive me if I don't mention your favourite. Just accept this column as a tribute to each and every Irishman who has made a valuable contribution to our game.

Perhaps the Irish don't get so passionately involved as the Scots, although Sammy Mac wouldn't agree.



Northern Ireland's Sammy Nelson should be in action for Arsenal against United at Highbury on Saturday.

More and more players are crossing the Irish Sea to seek their fame and fortune in England. Ireland's loss is definitely our gain.

One of the most recent successes is Gerry Ryan who was transferred to Derby County from Bohemians earlier this term.

Because of injuries the winger was quickly given his chance in the first team by Tommy Docherty and he became an overnight sensation with his tenacious skills.

Gerry has teamed up with fellow



Winger Gerry Ryan, Derby's talented "import" from Eire.

Tommy Cavanagh.

Although he's an Englishman, born in Liverpool, Cav fills a similar training role for Northern Ireland. Quite a compliment.

Cav pointed out United could in fact field a team made up of Scots and Irishmen. Perish the thought. Being an Englishman, I naturally hope that never happens.

Although there has been recent discussion on the possibility of an All-Ireland soccer team I can't see it becoming a reality. Not for a long time, anyhow.

No one would seriously consider asking Wales to combine with Scotland or England. So why think it would work in Ireland's case?

The two countries have never met at full international level. Strange that, isn't it?

They will clash next season, of

course, in the European Championship.

They did play against each other recently, though, when the Republic of Ireland Under-21's drew 1-1 with their Northern counterparts.

I've never played against Northern Ireland, but I was in the England team held to a 1-1 draw by Eire at Wembley in September, 1976.

As I said a while back in my column I'd welcome Eire into the British Championship — so would many people in the game. They would spark off a whole new interest at home and away.

I like the Irish. They are an easy-going people, who enjoy life. Old Trafford would certainly be a duller place without them.

So would Highbury, where United play Arsenal this Saturday (April 1st) — my birthday.

Starting with manager Terry Neill, there's a strong Irish Connection at the club.

Skipper Pat Rice, Pat Jennings and Sammy Nelson are Northern Ireland caps, while Liam Brady, David O'Leary and Frank Stapleton are Eire stars.

United have a poor record against Arsenal at Highbury over recent seasons. Our last five League visits have ended in either a 3-1 or 3-0 defeat. They also beat us up at Old T earlier this term, by 2-1.

Maybe the tide will turn for United on Saturday. Two points will make the ideal birthday present.

Now, just to stir Sammy McIlroy's blood, a couple of Irish jokes to end with.

Heard the one about the Irish manager who flooded the pitch so he could call the sub on? Or the Irish woodworm who was found dead in a brick?

You have? Oh, well, I can't win them all!

Enough of the blarney for this week. Cheers for now...

Gordon Hill

Irish connection

most kids there play some sort of ball game so they have an eye for soccer and can adapt very quickly.

Also, being a small soccer nation, talented youngsters are recognised more easily and given their chance to show their skills. And there are always English scouts at most games eagerly waiting to spot another George Best or Gerry Ryan. Players with potential who can be picked up for bargain fees.

It's the ambition of most footballers with leading clubs in the North and the Republic to eventually leave for England. Let's face it, a pro. player could hardly make a fortune with Glentoran or Bohemians.

Manchester United have close connections with Bohs.

Gerry Daly (now Derby), Ashley Grimes and new-boy Kevin Moran came from the Dublin club.

At the moment we seem to be "importing" more players from the South. I don't really know why that it is. Perhaps Johnny Giles is responsible.

His influence since taking over the national side and Shamrock Rovers has helped the game become much more popular in the Republic.

I notice SHOOT now includes more items from Ireland, an indication of football's increasing popularity in the country.

My mail-bag now contains many more letters from both North and South Ireland.

But as you will expect, most of the letters delivered to Old Trafford from those two countries are for the Micks at the club.

I'd better mention them all, otherwise Sammy will never forgive me.

There's goalkeeper Paddy Roche and Ashley Grimes from Eire and Dave McCreery, Jimmy Nicholl, Tommy Jackson and Chris McGrath from Northern Ireland. These four are all from Belfast I think. That's where Sammy was born.

And I musn't forget our trainer



SHOOT: When the qualifying round draw was made everyone believed Olympic Champions East Germany would win through to Argentina. What did you think of them in your two games and how did you rate your chances?

SARA: We knew we were outsiders, but we were also very optimistic. It was quite clear the East Germans were our most serious opponents and many Austrian fans believed we would fail to qualify. It was one of the biggest football thrills of my life to take part in our two duels in Vienna and Leipzig with East Germany and I think we were not at all lucky, but worthy, of a place in the Finals. The East Germans had perfect physical condition and almost military tactics in their team formation. We were also very well prepared by our

points away to East Germany and win in Turkey, but we managed it drawing 1-1 in Leipzig and then beating Turkey 1-0 before 85,000 fanatical supporters in Izmir. It was no great game from a football viewpoint — indeed we played rather poorly — but we won and got both points and that was what was important.

SHOOT: Once more you are outsiders after the draw in Buenos Aires, having to play against Brazil, Spain and Sweden. Have you played against any of them before and how do you think you will get on against them in Argentina?

SARA: In the simplest terms I must agree we are outsiders again. Once more we are optimistic. Brazil are the big favourites, of course, but we have a fair chance. As I see it, if we play at our best in the first

No.9

World Cup



Argentina '78

CAPTAINS



World Cup action between East Germany and Austria.

'West Germany can help us

coach Helmut Senekowitsch, whom we call Seki, and above all he managed to inspire everyone with a real team spirit. Very often in the past, Austrians have played as individuals in the national team. Under Seki we played for each other, for the team. In the first game with East Germany we were very unlucky not to be granted a winning goal with the score at 1-1 by the Welsh referee Tom Reynolds. Even neutral observers in Vienna agreed we were robbed of victory for we scored a perfectly good goal. That made it difficult because after that we had to gain

game in Argentina, against Spain, then we can beat them. A victory or even a draw would bring favourable Press comment and improve the morale of our players still further, win a few friends amongst the spectators, but most important, improve our self-confidence. Surprisingly we have had some good results against Brazil in my playing career. 0-1 in Rio de Janeiro in 1970; 1-1 in Sao Paulo in 1971; 1-1 in 1973 in Vienna and in 1974 we drew 0-0 in Sao Paulo. So we must have at least a fair chance to salvage something from what will surely be our toughest game. Spain, I believe, we can beat because I don't think

they like too much physical contact and they don't play as fast as we do. We Austrians get into difficulties more against really powerful physical teams like England more than any others. But I must confess the Spaniards might be more skilful with the ball individually and also perhaps better at combined passing movements. Against Spain we can make up for that with our team-work, which I hope and believe will be better than that of Spain, even if as Latins they will be favoured by Argentinian fans who regard Spain almost as home. With Sweden it is a different matter. We have an old score to settle there and I think we can do it. For the 1974 World Cup they beat us 2-1 in a play-off on a snow covered pitch at Gelsenkirchen and that time they qualified.

Now I really believe it is our turn, for I don't think they have improved in the last four years while our results, unbeaten in 1977, prove without doubt our strength is increasing.

SHOOT: So you can see Austria qualifying for phase two in Argentina?

SARA: I am sure we can beat Sweden and I think Brazil will fear us for our recent record against them. That is why I reckon we can qualify if we get a good result in the first match against Spain.

SHOOT: Which eight teams do you see qualifying for the Quarter-Final second stage?

SARA: In my opinion Argentina and Italy from Group One; West Germany and Poland from Group Two; Brazil and Austria from Group Three, and Holland and



Coach Helmut Senekowitsch (left). The Austrian side line-up. From left to right: Sara, Kancilia, Pazzey, Krieger, Kreuz, Krankl, Breitenberger, Hattenberger, Hickersberger, Jara, Stering.

Robert Sara AUSTRIA



Austrian players
celebrate after
qualifying for
Argentina.

in the Finals'



Scotland will succeed in the other group.

SHOOT: Who are the best teams in the Finals, then, and what are their strengths?

SARA: Argentina obviously have the great advantage of being at home, while the Italians must be good to have eliminated England. I know West Germany are not as strong as in 1974, but generally, in terms of teamwork, tactics and their athletic approach, they are the best in Europe. Poland are very skilful and play excellent football. Brazil have a lot of talent and are almost at home in South America. Holland are not as good as they were, but I think they and Scotland will be much too strong for Peru

though I cannot see them beating Brazil or West Germany.

SHOOT: Do you think Austria can reach the Semi-Finals, then, and if not who do you think will be the last four?

SARA: I would rather not say anything about Austria at this level, just remain calm and optimistic. Regarding the others I look to those with recent World Cup experience in their sides. Poland, for example, I tip as dark horses, which might surprise you, and I think Argentina and Italy are going to be drained by having to play against Hungary and France in Round One and if on top of that they get key players injured they could be in trouble. I think overall the Semi-Finalists will be West Germany, Poland, Brazil and Holland with Brazil and West Ger-

players, but their style of play lags behind that of Europe. Also from my experience of touring South America I would say Argentina, like all the South Americans, have not improved their training methods as well as the Europeans have in recent years. They are still playing an old style of football. Their only real hope in my view is from the cheering spectators who will back the home side all the way and that could make a big difference for the South American fans can be almost frightening to Europeans.

SHOOT: If Austria are going to do as well as you hope, who are the players that are going to be the key figures in your team and how do they play?

SARA: First of all our goalkeeper Friedl Koncilia has really fast reactions to save shots and is very good and brave at coming out of goal. Then our stopper Bruno Pezzey is a perfect header of the ball really controlling the space in front of our goal and very good in the tackle, too. In midfield we have a real ball-artist, the "King of Dribblers" Herbert Prohaska and we have a real live-wire centre-forward in Hans Krankl who is dynamic and very fast as well as good in the air. He very rarely plays for 90 minutes without scoring at least one goal.

● Interview by Dr. Walter Smekal.

Next Week
PIRRI
Spain

FOCUS ON Hans Krankl

FULL NAME: Hans Krankl
BIRTHPLACE: Vienna
BIRTHDATE: February 14th, 1953
HEIGHT: 5ft 11½ins
WEIGHT: 11st 11lb
PREVIOUS CLUBS: None, I've always played for Rapid, except when I was loaned to WAC for one year (1971)
MARRIED: Yes
CHILDREN: One boy, one girl
CAR: Peugeot 504
FAVOURITE PLAYER: I like many
FAVOURITE OTHER TEAMS: Manchester United and Real Madrid
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: Morini of Juventus
MOST MEMORABLE MATCHES: For Rapid in the Austrian League last year when we beat Grazer AK 11-1 and I scored seven goals; for Austria against Malta in a World Cup qualifying tie in Salzburg when we won 11-1 and again I scored seven times
BIGGEST THRILL: My international debut against Brazil in Vienna — 1-1 in 1973
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT: Losing 2-1 to Sweden in the 1974 World Cup play-off tie. The two countries had identical points and goal-difference so had to play a decider in Gelsenkirchen (Germany)
BEST COUNTRY VISITED: Italy
FAVOURITE FOOD: Hamburgers
MISCELLANEOUS LIKES: Other sports, television, cinema
MISCELLANEOUS DISLIKES: Opera



FAVOURITE T.V. SHOWS: All sports programmes and "Ein Echter Wiener Geht Nicht Unter" — "No True Viennese Will Ever Be Defeated", a series of shows presenting a rather low-level Vienna family, spoken in typical Viennese suburban slang
FAVOURITE SINGERS: Hans Ambros, Westher Report.
FAVOURITE ACTORS: Jack Nicholson, Robert Redford
BEST FRIEND: I have many, especially among my fellow professionals but wouldn't like to select one in particular
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: My first coach, Sepp Pecanka, who was responsible for the

youth team at Rapid. Also, I have been inspired by the warm reaction from the fans
BIGGEST DRAG IN SOCCER: Unfair play. As a centre-forward I have a "shadow" in every game, which I don't mind, but I don't like opponents who only try to injure me
INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: 28 caps. In 1975 I was awarded the Silver Boot by Adidas as the second highest scorer in Europe behind Jordao (Benfica)
PERSONAL AMBITION: I'd like to play in West Germany, Holland or Britain after the World Cup when the ban on our players to go abroad will be lifted
PROFESSIONAL AMBITION: The same
IF YOU WEREN'T A FOOTBALLER WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'D BE? A Grand Prix driver
WHICH PERSON IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? I'd have liked to have met the late James Dean (American actor), now I think it would be nice to meet Muhammad Ali

IMPROVE YOUR SWIMMING — TAKE A TIP FROM DAVID WILKIE BRITAIN'S OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALLIST



**BE A
WINNER
— BE LIKE
DAVID
WILKIE**



LIE AS FLAT AND AS STREAMLINED AS POSSIBLE IN THE WATER, WITH YOUR TOES POINTED AND YOUR ARMS FULLY STRETCHED TO THE FRONT, ABOUT THREE INCHES BELOW THE SURFACE. THE FIRST MOVEMENT IS TO PRESS BOTH PALMS DOWNWARDS AND OUTWARDS.



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compiled by John Pyke

BRISTOL CITY'S narrow escape from relegation last season was not a good omen for their supporters as the new term opened. Early results deepened those fears that a second rearguard action was needed to hold City's position in the top grade.

In recent weeks the situation has eased as the club moved into the calmer waters above the relegation zone with some fine results, including a 2-0 victory at Leeds.

City perhaps are not held in the same awe as other First Division giants, but they are a go-ahead club who deserve success. They have the longest-serving manager in the Football League in Alan Dicks; a board of directors who give him 100 per cent support; and in Tony Rance have a man who combines the difficult task of being secretary and commercial manager with real flair.

It was Bristol City's bright promotional idea to launch the successful television series "All in the Game" two years ago.

GROUND:

Ashton Gate.

SIZE OF PITCH:

115 yards by 75 yards.

TELEPHONE No:

Bristol 632812.

NICKNAME:

'Robins'.

COLOURS:

Red shirts, white shorts, red stockings.

BRISTOL CITY

HOW TO GET TO ASHTON GATE

Ashton Gate can be reached by buses 6, 7, 9, 19 and 22. Parson Street railway station is within walking distance of the ground. By special arrangement Ashton Gate station is open to visiting supporters' trains.

IF YOU TRAVEL BY CAR

Bristol City season-ticket holders can park at the ground. There is plenty of street parking around about.



BRISTOL CITY manager Alan Dicks (left) was appointed boss of the Ashton Gate club in October, 1967 and is the longest serving manager in the Football League. As a player he began his career as a midfielder with Chelsea in 1951 making his League debut in 1953. Southend United signed him in 1958 and four years later he moved on to Coventry until taking over as Bristol City's boss.

RECORD VICTORY:

11-0 v Chichester, F.A. Cup, First Round, November 5th, 1960.

RECORD DEFEAT:

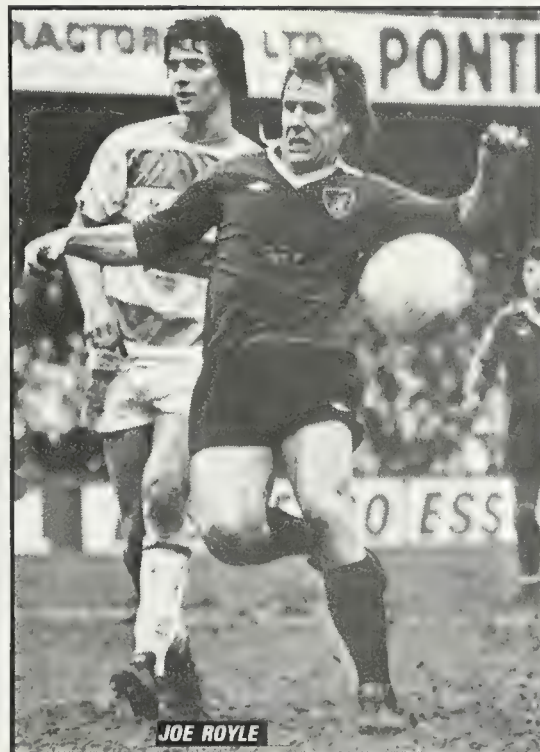
0-9 v Coventry City, Division Three (South), April 28th, 1934.

MOST LEAGUE POINTS IN A SEASON:

70 in Division Three (South), 1954-55.

HIGHEST LEAGUE SCORER IN A SEASON:

Don Clark 36 in Division Three (South), 1946-47.



JOE ROYLE

TOP LEAGUE SCORERS

1972-73	Gerry Gow	12
1973-74	Keith Fear	8
1974-75	Don Gillies and Keith Fear	9
1975-76	Tom Ritchie	18
1976-77	Tom Ritchie and Chris Garland	7



JOHN SHAW



PETER CORMACK

THEIR RECORD SINCE 1960-61

(C — League Champions; P — Promoted; R — Relegated; W — Winners; F — Finalists; S/F — Semi-Finalists; Q/F — Quarter-Finalists)

SEASON	LEAGUE Division & Position	F.A. CUP Round Reached	LEAGUE CUP Round Reached
1960-61	3 — 14th	4th	3rd
1961-62	3 — 6th	3rd	1st
1962-63	3 — 14th	3rd	2nd
1963-64	3 — 5th	4th	1st
1964-65	3 — 2nd (P)	3rd	2nd
1965-66	2 — 5th	3rd	2nd
1966-67	2 — 15th	5th	2nd
1967-68	2 — 19th	5th	2nd
1968-69	2 — 16th	3rd	3rd
1969-70	2 — 14th	3rd	2nd
1970-71	2 — 19th	3rd	S/F
1971-72	2 — 8th	3rd	1st
1972-73	2 — 5th	4th	2nd
1973-74	2 — 16th	Q/F	3rd
1974-75	2 — 5th	3rd	3rd
1975-76	2 — 2nd (P)	3rd	2nd
1976-77	1 — 18th	3rd	2nd
1977-78	1 — —	3rd	3rd

Continued on page 22

BRISTOL

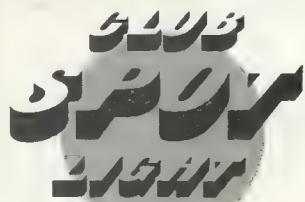


BACK ROW: Kevin Mabbutt, Don Gil, Shaw, Clive Whitehead, Howard Pritchle.
CENTRE ROW: Ken Wimshurst (coach), Ritchie, Gary Collier, Chris Galt (physiotherapist).
FRONT ROW: Alan Dicks (manager), Geoff Merrick, Gerry Sweeney, Gerry Collins (assistant manager).

OL CITY



Back row: Ray Cashley, Norman Hunter, John Hard
 Middle row: Paul Chesley, David Rodgers, Tom
 Land, Brian McNally, Les Barclay
 Front row: Jimmy Mann, John Ball, Trevor Talbot,
 Garry, Keith Fair (now Plymouth), Tony



continued

PEN-PICTURES

(L. App:— League Appearances; G:— Goals; S:— Substitutes. All records to end of December, 1977)

GARY COLLIER: Central defender signed professional in November, 1972. Born Bristol. Ht. 6.1. Wt. 12.0. L. App:— 179. G:— 3.

PETER CORMACK: Midfielder or striker signed from Liverpool for £90,000 in November, 1976. Scottish Under-23 international with nine full caps. Born Edinburgh. Ht. 5.9. Wt. 10.13. L. App:— Hibs 182, Nottm. For. 74, Liverpool 119 and 6 sub, Bristol City 32 and 2 sub. G:— Hibernian 75, Nottm. For. 15, Liverpool 21, Bristol City 9.

CHRIS GARLAND: Striker signed from Leicester City for £100,000 in December, 1976. An England Under-23 international who has missed most of this season owing to injury. Born Bristol. Ht. 5.9½. Wt. 11.12. L. App:— Chelsea 89 and 3 sub, Leicester 52 and 3 sub, Bristol City (two spells) 162 and 2 sub. G:— Chelsea 22, Leicester 15, Bristol City (two spells) 39.

DON GILLIES: Defender or striker who was signed from Morton for £30,000 in March, 1973. A Scottish Under-23 international. Born Glencoe. Ht. 5.10. Wt. 11.5. L. App:— Morton 45 and 2 sub, Bristol City 143 and 13 sub. G:— Morton 23, Bristol City 24.

GERRY GOW: Midfielder signed professional in June, 1969. A Scottish Under-23 international. Born Glasgow. Ht. 5.8. Wt. 10.8. L. App:— 269 and 7 sub. G:— 37.

NORMAN HUNTER: Hard tackling defender signed from Leeds United in October, 1976. England Under-23 international with 28 full caps. Born Eighton Banks. Ht. 5.11½. Wt. 12.5. L. App:— Leeds 543, Bristol City 51. G:— Leeds 18, Bristol City 1.

KEVIN MABBUTT: Midfielder or striker signed professional in January, 1976. League debut this season against Nottingham Forest on August 23rd, 1977. Born Bristol. Ht. 5.7. Wt. 10.2. L. App:— 14 and 3 sub. G:— 4.

JIMMY MANN: Midfielder signed from Leeds United on a free transfer in May, 1974. Born Poole. Ht. 5.6. Wt. 11.1. L. App:— Leeds 2, Bristol City 92 and 16 sub. G:— Bristol City 14.

GEOFF MERRICK: Defender signed professional in August, 1968. Born Bristol. Ht. 5.9. Wt. 11.0. L. App:— 282 and 5 sub. G:— 9.

TOM RITCHIE: Striker signed professional in July, 1969. Born Edinburgh. Ht. 5.11. Wt. 12.8. L. App:— 187 and 9 sub. G:— 47.

DAVID RODGERS: Central defender signed professional in July, 1969. Born Bristol. Ht. 6.1½. Wt. 13.2. L. App:— 79 and 2 sub. G:— 3.



City's Don Gillies (above) beats Paul Brush of West Ham during their 3-2 home win. Jimmy Mann (below, left)



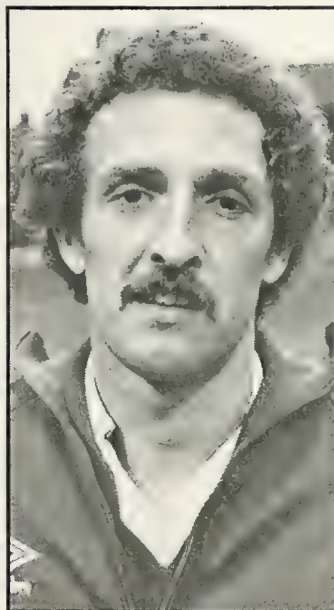
JOE ROYLE: Striker signed from Manchester City for £80,000 in December, 1977. Joe made a sensational start at Ashton Gate by scoring four goals v Middlesbrough on November 26th, 1977 while on loan from Manchester City. England Under-23 international with six full caps. Born Liverpool. Ht. 6.1. Wt. 13.8. L. App:— Everton 229 and 2 sub, Manchester City 98 and 1 sub, Bristol City 7. G:— Everton 102, Man City 23, Bristol City 4.

JOHN SHAW: Goalkeeper who has made the League position his own. Signed from Leeds United on a free transfer in May, 1974. Born Stirling. Ht. 6.1. Wt. 13.7. L. App:— Bristol City 54.

GERRY SWEENEY: Midfielder signed from Morton for £22,000 in August, 1971. Born Glasgow. Ht. 5.10. Wt. 10.10. L. App:— Morton 137 and 2 sub, Bristol City 251 and 7 sub. G:— Morton 16, Bristol City 21.

TREVOR TAINTON: Midfielder signed professional in September, 1965. Born Bristol. Ht. 5.8. Wt. 11.7. L. App:— 313 and 25 sub. G:— 19.

CLIVE WHITEHEAD: Top class winger who was signed professional in August, 1973. Born Birmingham. Ht. 5.9. Wt. 10.7. L. App:— 96 and 12 sub. G:— 6.



GEOFF MERRICK



TOM RITCHIE

LEAGUE FIXTURES

Aug			
20	Wolverhampton W.	H	2-3
23	Nottm. For.	A	0-1
27	Leicester C.	A	0-0
Sept			
3	Aston Villa	H	1-1
10	Norwich C.	A	0-1
17	West Ham	H	3-2
24	Man. City	A	0-2
Oct			
1	Q.P.R.	H	2-2
8	Leeds U.	H	3-2
15	Everton	A	0-1
22	Arsenal	H	0-2
29	Chelsea	A	0-1
Nov			
5	Newcastle U.	A	1-1
12	Derby Co.	H	3-1
19	Liverpool	A	1-1
26	Middlesbrough	H	4-1
Dec			
3	Coventry C.	A	1-1
10	Ipswich T.	H	2-0
17	Derby Co.	A	0-1
26	W.B.A.	H	3-1
27	Birmingham C.	A	0-3
31	Nottm. For.	H	1-3
Jan			
2	Wolverhampton W.	A	0-0
14	Leicester C.	H	0-0
28	Aston Villa	A	0-1
Feb			
4	Norwich C.	H	3-0
8	Man. United	A	1-1
11	West Ham	A	2-1
17	Man. City	H	2-2
25	Q.P.R.	A	2-2
Mar			
4	Leeds U.	A	2-0
11	Everton	H	0-1
18	Arsenal	A	
21	Chelsea	H	
25	Birmingham C.	H	
27	W.B.A.	A	
Apr			
1	Newcastle U.	H	
8	Middlesbrough	A	
15	Liverpool	H	
22	Ipswich T.	A	
25	Man. United	H	
29	Coventry C.	H	

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'No regrets about leaving Forest'

ONE OF the earliest casualties of Brian Clough's buying-blotz to ensure Nottingham Forest, promoted from the Second Division last season, could meet the daunting challenge of the First Division was goalkeeper John Middleton, now with Derby County.

John, a regular in Forest's promotion side, began the present term in his usual place between the posts, but Clough's £275,000 pay-out for the world-class talents of Stoke's Peter Shilton, indicated young Middleton looked set for a spell in the reserves.

Tommy Docherty, however, who had just moved into the boss's chair at Derby, swiftly altered that situation when he stepped in to sign the deposed Forest 'keeper, and recalled him to the glamour and prestige of First Division soccer.

With Derby's F.A. Cup hopes very efficiently buried for another year by West Bromwich Albion, and only improvement in their League position left to play for, Middleton could perhaps be excused for feeling a trifle bitter about missing out on the remarkable success Forest have enjoyed this season.

But the man who lined-up on the opening day of the season as Brian Clough's first team goalkeeper, has nothing but praise for his former team-mates, his former

manager, and the England star who displaced him.

Says John: "Of course it was a blow when Mr. Clough signed Peter, but it certainly didn't leave me bearing a grudge against either of them. Mr. Clough was always very positive regarding his ambitions for Forest, if they went up. There was never any talk about survival or consolidating. He intended having a real go, and to do that he had to build a side fit to rank with the big guns in the First Division.

"So, when Peter became available, it was only natural Brian went in for him. He explained his reasons to me, and I appreciated them. He wanted the best, and Peter is one of the finest goalkeepers in the world. It was as straightforward as that.

"Mr. Clough also took the trouble to point out I was a very promising 'keeper, and with two or three years added experience I'd rate with the best in the country, which was encouraging. But what I wanted was first team football, and there wasn't going to be a lot of that as under-study to Peter Shilton.

"Then Tommy Docherty made his offer, and it took me around one minute flat to decide the Baseball Ground was the place for me. I've never regretted the move, although after a fairly good start,

says

John Middleton



my form slumped a little. I wasn't too happy about some of the goals I was giving away, ones I think I could have saved had I concentrated more.

"All the really great goalkeepers are totally involved in any game they play in, even when their own team is continually attacking. Men like Ray Clemence and Peter Shilton are following every move. There's no chance of a sudden break by the opponents catching them on the hop.

"I have a terrific admiration for Ray, who, like myself, comes from Skegness. When I was a school-boy, and he was playing for Scunthorpe, I picked up useful tips from Ray when he used to do some training during the summer.

"As a matter of fact, Ray gave me a really hectic training session a few years later, on Skegness Town's ground, just before I went for a trial with Forest.

"The experience I gained with Forest last season, and my ever-growing confidence with Derby is beginning to pay dividends. I was absolutely delighted to be selected for the England Under-21 squad for the European Under-21 Championship Quarter-Final against Italy.

"Next season I'm sure we'll be a real Championship force and John Middleton will have done his national prospects the world of good."

LEEDS striker Allan Clarke is convinced his side can complete the fabulous treble this season, and maybe even the four-timer.

No, Clarke hasn't gone off his head. He knows the Elland Road club had lost all hope of landing one of the major trophies by the time he returned to first team duty at the end of February after a ten month lay-off.

When he talks about "my lads" he's referring to the players of Collingham Under-18s, a local Sunday team near his home.

He has been managing them for 15 months and last season, his first in charge, they won three trophies.

Says Clarke: "They are in four competitions in all, and I've told them the only way they can improve on last year is to win all four this time. They're already in the Final of one Cup competition and they're unbeaten in the League so far.

"Looking after these lads has been the only thing that's kept me sane over the past year. I've never known a lay-off like it before and being involved with the team gave me an interest."

The Leeds striker puts the youngsters through their paces on Monday and Wednesday evening training sessions — League fixtures permitting — and insists on them meeting him 90 minutes before kick-off time on Sunday mornings.

"It's all good practice for when I finish playing and look for a position in League management. That's why I took the job on in the first place. And I've just got my first coaching badge.

"Not that I'm thinking about quitting as a player. Don't write me off yet. I'll go on until somebody up there tells me it's time to call it a day. I'm hoping that won't be too soon."

Clarke went into hospital for a knee operation after Leeds' F.A. Cup Semi-Final defeat by Manchester United last April and

Jimmy Armfield to recall him to the League team.

Clarke made a great comeback against Chelsea, laying on a goal for Frank Gray, and then scored the only goal at Manchester United four days later.

Ironically, the United team included his former striking partner at Elland Road, Joe Jordan.

ALLAN CLARKE player and manager with different teams!

thought he'd be ready for the start of this season.

But he suffered one set-back after another. Even then, it never entered 31-year-old Clarke's head to call it a day.

"It was very depressing not being able to play, but it was just a question of being patient.

"I watched every Leeds home game, and even that was agony of a sort. As a player, you tend to kick every ball when you're watching and when things go wrong for the team, you find yourself itching to get out there."

When the knee was finally ready to stand up to a 90-minute test, it was in the reserves he had to prove himself. He knew he would need a fairly long spell in the second team, but six goals in eight games were enough for manager

"Joe and Gordon McQueen were both sold while I was out and obviously you miss players like them. But the side have done very well since their departure.

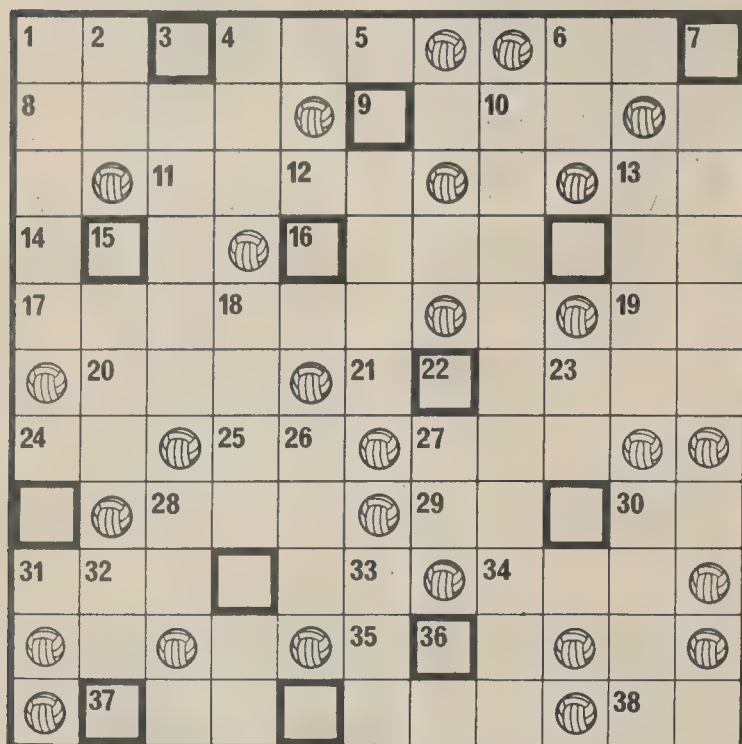
"Joe wasn't the best striker I'd played with at Leeds. That was Mick Jones. It usually takes quite a few games to build up an understanding with another forward, but Mick and I somehow hit it off after two or three matches.

"I've had a few partners at Leeds and now I'm playing alongside Ray Hankin for the first time. The other strikers have come and gone, but I've carried on in my same old way and I'm hoping Ray and I will get a good understanding going."



Go for the Double

After solving the clues in this specially compiled crossword, you can use the letters in the thick-edged squares to form the name of a Nottingham Forest midfielder. Answers on page 38.



ACROSS:—

- (1) — Athletic, Scottish Second Division club.
- (6) Gerry --- strong of Spurs.
- (8) --s-n-l, famous team from North London.
- (9) — Fife; Scottish Division One club from Bayview Park.
- (11) Take four letters from Southampton to break sharply.
- (13) Mickey B--- of Newcastle.
- (14) F-etha-s Gro-nd (Darlington).
- (16) The ---, nickname of club in clue 8.
- (17) --nf-rm-lne A-hletl-. Sweet from the missing letters.
- (19) --odison Park, home of Everton.
- (20) Gre--- Road, ground of Crewe Alexandra.
- (21) The number of men in the team
- (24) — James' Park. Ground of Newcastle United.
- (25) Dea- C-urt (Bournemouth).
- (27) The C-na-i-s, Norwich City nickname.
- (28) Help . . . perhaps first for an injured player!
- (29) Proceed by smooth continuous movement.
- (31) Might be held by the Social Club to raise funds.
- (34) B-r-sle- from Oakwell ground.
- (35) -le--moor; ground of Torquay United.
- (37) Runners-up in the 1974 World Cup Final.
- (38) Ian Brit--n of Chelsea.

DOWN:—

- (1) G-y-i-l-Pa-k (Arbroath). Got on from the omissions.
- (2) Watford, The H--nets.
- (3) The final score gives this!
- (4) Enthusiastic supporter.
- (5) What is generally thought or supposed.
- (6) John Pr--t of Spurs.
- (7) Don ---, Derby County midfield player.
- (10) Alan ---, Arsenal striker.
- (12) Vicar--- Road, home of clue 2.
- (13) Spur on or drive.
- (15) Take four letters from Portsmouth for something imperative.
- (18) Showing sarcastic disbelief or sneering.
- (22) Ian Cal---han of Liverpool.
- (23) Blood carrier.
- (24) Unhappy; perhaps because of one's performance.
- (26) Glenn H--dl- of Spurs.
- (28) The Sw--s from Vetch Field ground.
- (30) Surname of one of the joint record holders in Scotland for scoring 8 goals in a match.
- (32) Kenny D-Igli-- of Liverpool.
- (33) John ---rrow, Chelsea full-back.
- (36) Griff-- Park (home of Brentford).

WHEN Liverpool lost 3-1 to Chelsea in the League at the start of March I suffered a double-blow. To my pride — and also to my hope of beating a record for goalkeepers of 350 consecutive appearances.

In SHOOT I'd predicted vengeance on Chelsea for knocking us out of the F.A. Cup in the Third Round and I had to eat my words as we trooped off the Stamford Bridge pitch humiliated once again.

Apart from my hurt feelings, my right shoulder throbbed with pain from making a full-length save in the first-half.

Being injured badly enough to be sidelined is something every player dreads, and until then I had been fortunate in not missing a game since I became a first team regular around six years ago.

Before my promotion I'd missed a few reserve games through damaged ankles.

Most injuries are caused in clashes with other players, but at Chelsea I jarred my shoulder when my arm hit the ground hard as I went for the ball.

It came in diagonally from my left and as Steve Finnieston ran on to it, I positioned myself so that he had no choice but to shoot straight at me. However, he seemed to miss the ball, and I had to move suddenly to the right. All my weight came down on my elbow and I felt my shoulder-blade lift out of its socket. As my entire arm went numb, I was sure I'd completely dislocated it, but when I kicked for touch I heard a "click" as the shoulder went back into place.

After treatment I was able to con-

RAY CLEMENCE

talking soccer



Clemence collides with Chelsea's Clive Walker during their recent League clash at Stamford Bridge. Chelsea won 3-1.

tinue and although I was still in pain I can't blame that for my failing to stop any of Chelsea's three goals. Tommy Langley's mighty swerving shot was unreachable and I also had no chance with Finnieston's clip over my head or his interception of Emlyn Hughes' weak header back to me.

That night I was in such agony I had to take several pain-killing tablets.

My visit to a specialist revealed that the partial dislocation of my shoulder had left me with damaged tendons, and I was ordered to rest.

This meant missing the mid-week game against Derby at the Baseball Ground and the home game with Leeds on the following Saturday. However, I went along with the lads on both occasions. It helped me and I wanted to give moral support

ter, formerly of Wrexham.

I fell 17 short at a memorable 333 games.

My short spell on the sidelines gave me an insight into the agonies that must be suffered by those who strike the greater misfortune of being out of the game for months, or even longer.

The likes of Colin Bell, for instance, who endured the horrific experience of spending two years recovering from a badly-damaged knee. At times he must have been near to despair, and needed all the encouragement from his friends and family, as well as will-power, to avoid giving up the ghost.

Colin plays in midfield, where a high work-rate is important, but it's the strikers who run the greatest risk of being hurt, and consequently miss more games.

It's very seldom, as a recent SHOOT article pointed out, a front-runner finishes a season as an ever-present.

Their vulnerability comes through spending so much time with their backs to the goal, trying to gather the ball or knock it on.

Often defenders just can't avoid kicking them or colliding.

Ankles, heads and backs are the areas that seem to suffer. Probably the most dreaded thing that can befall a player is a broken leg. Only once has this happened during a match in which I was playing for the reserves, watched by only a few thousand people.

John Webb, a Liverpool youngster with a lot of ability, was tackled fairly, but his leg must have been at an awkward angle. There was a sickening "crack" that echoed

ness on a muddy, clinging surface.

In recent years groin strains have become common. Several of England's 1970 World Cup stars complained of them following the games in Mexico. Alan Mullery, in particular, who is now manager of Brighton.

With such strains it's very difficult to tell when a player has recovered. Often he'll be out for a week or ten days, return to the team, only for the trouble to flare up again, and he's forced to rest for another spell.

Apart from injuries, there's the danger of a player cracking up through sheer exhaustion, especially if he allows himself to become involved in strenuous off-field commercial activities.

I remember when Kevin Keegan, after winning a TV Superstars Semi-Final — during which he crashed

'Injury robbed me of a games record'

and guidance to my stand-in, Steve Ogrozcovic, who joined us this season from Chesterfield.

Steve's parents both come from Yugoslavia, but he was born in England and would like to play for this country.

It was a strange and frustrating experience watching Liverpool play without me; all through the sort of fall I've made hundreds of times before in my career without ill-effect.

Could be, though, that the pummelling over the years had progressively weakened my shoulder until it finally gave way!

Since beating Chris Lawler's club consecutive appearance record, I had been looking forward to overtaking the record for 'keepers of 350 games, held by Brian Lloyd of Ches-



Gray (light strip) scores Villa's first goal during their 2-1 win against Liverpool at Anfield.

from a bike and badly scarred his back — collapsed while driving in the Northampton area and was rushed to hospital.

The specialist explained he'd blown up like a car being driven at 120 mph when it had been designed to do only 100 mph.

Kevin hoped that one of the benefits of moving to the Continent would be he would be able to cut down on his commitments. When I last met him, for the West Germany/England game, he was still dashing around all over the place, trying to please everyone who wanted his services.

His departure has left an opening for the likes of Trevor Francis and Andy Gray, two potential superstars, and I hope they heed the lesson.

This Saturday, I could be facing Andy Gray, recovered from his leg injury, and I can't say I relish the prospect.

Andy is a tremendous, old-fashioned centre-forward blessed with a lot of ability and courage. He always seems to play well against us.

He scored both Villa's goals when they beat us at Anfield by 2-1 earlier in the season, dealing us our first home defeat.

Recalling Chelsea, I'm not going to make the mistake of saying we're out for revenge on Villa for that defeat at Anfield, and the 5-1 thrashing they gave us at Villa Park last season. Just that we hope to get a satisfying result!

Ray Clemence



Manchester City's Bell beats Bryan Robson of West Ham.

'Andy Gray could be fit again to face us on Saturday'

'Colin Bell endured two years sidelined with a damaged knee'

around the ground and cast a shadow over the remainder of the game.

It was six months before John was able to play again. Unfortunately he failed to live up to his initial promise, perhaps because of the injury.

When such a player makes a comeback, there's the likelihood he'll be worried about whether his injury has completely healed, and fear a recurrence.

Any reluctance to go into a tackle can place a greater risk on the player. In fact, there's a belief in football that the harder you go in, the less likely you are to get hurt.

As I pointed out earlier, many injuries are not the result of physical contact. Muscles can be pulled, hamstrings stretched, either very early in a game when the body is not warmed-up, or through tired-

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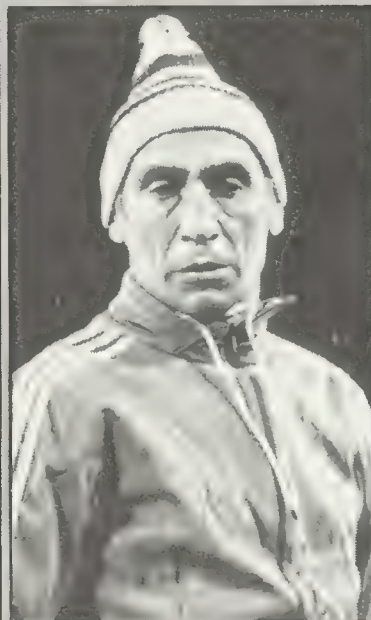
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SHOOT 3

ORDINARY PLAYERS, BUT GREAT MANAGERS



YOU DON'T have to be a successful footballer to be a successful manager ... that's the message from Europe's World Cup Finals bosses.

Some can look back on long careers as internationals but others, like Scotland's Ally MacLeod, never actually played for their country.

MacLeod was a tricky winger in his playing days, yet not considered international standard. Still, his record as a manager proves you don't have to have reached the highspots as a player to do well in the "hot seat".

Sweden's Georg Ericson, one of the two surviving managers from the '74 Finals (Helmut Schoen is the other) didn't play for his country, either.

Two of the "dark horses" in Argentina could be Hungary and France, but their bosses had limited international experience.

Lajos Baroti of Hungary had his career wrecked by injury after a couple of caps, while Michel

Hidalgo of France can look back on the briefest of international outings — once as a substitute 16 years ago.

Even the great Helmut Schoen won only 16 caps (he scored 17 goals, though), but his international career was shortened by World War Two.

Italy's Enzo Bearzot (left) collected just one cap, and Poland's Jacek Gmoch is inexperienced in terms of playing at the highest level.

Other European bosses fared better as players. Spain manager Ladislao Kubala represented THREE countries — Hungary (where he was born), Czechoslovakia and Spain, and totalled 36 caps in all.

Ernst Happel, the Austrian in charge of Holland, played 51 times for his country and appeared in two World Cup Finals.

Austria's Helmut Senekowitsch was capped around 30 times and helped his country beat England 3-1 in Vienna 17 years ago.

SCHEVENINGEN is a Dutch seaside resort near The Hague. The town was very significant during the War as its name was used, during the German invasion, to discover whether soldiers were Dutch or German. Scheveningen can't be pronounced properly by a German.

From Scheveningen comes Martin Jol, who plays for Den Haag. Both Ajax and Bayern made enquiries about Jol and were told the transfer fee would be at least £200,000.

AMERICAN AGENT WANTS ARGENTINA STARS

I FEEL sorry for Argentina manager Cesar Luis Menotti. He's trying to prepare his World Cup squad in peace, but people keep rocking the boat! The latest in a series of upsetting incidents is the arrival in Buenos Aires of a Texan called Robert Kap, armed with the traditional "fistful of dollars".

Kap claims to be representing several North American teams, including Dallas Tornado, Houston Hurricane, Oakland Siompers, San Jose Earthquakes and Washington Diplomats, and he promptly offered a million dollars for international midfielder Ricardo Villa (whom he rates as "extraordinarily good-looking, a good physical specimen, great publicity material and a decent footballer" in that order) and ominously announced he'll be approaching 15 other members of Menotti's squad.

APPARENTLY the goalkeeper of Brazilian team CB Baloja, Paolo Pereira, was caught napping recently — literally. His side were leading 18-0 against Valmalena when an opposing striker spotted Pereira leaning against a goal-post.

He tried a long-range shot and Pereira didn't move. He'd fallen asleep.

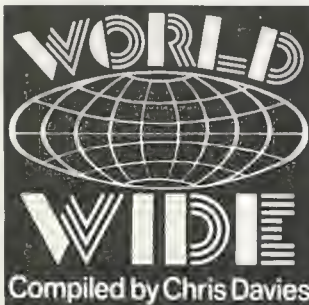
ROJO'S UNDISCLOSED SCANDAL

ATHLETIC Bilbao's international left-winger Rojo I (there are two Rojos at Bilbao) has always been a controversial and temperamental character. And this season he's in trouble again after playing only 28 minutes of League football! Rojo was out of action for five months with a complicated tendon injury, having made just one U.E.F.A. Cup appearance.

He made a triumphant return in February, when he played 23 minutes against Real Madrid, and had a decisive hand in their 2-0 victory. A week later he made the trip to Madrid and played just the final five minutes against Atletico, yet laid on a sensational winning goal.

Just as the future looked rosy for Rojo ... scandal! Bilbao manager Koldo Aguirre suddenly announced Rojo had been suspended, fined, and banned from even training with the club.

At the time of writing the reasons are as yet undisclosed ...



TEAM FOR SALE

HOW DO you fancy buying a real live Third Division footballer for the knock-down price of £30? If the idea appeals to you, Majorca's the place to head for. The Spanish Third Division side has been in severe financial trouble for the last couple of years, and finally the players were put up for auction as part of legal proceedings to recover some of the debts.

There were no bidders at the first two auctions, but at the third a Majorca fan picked up a "job lot" of 11 assorted first teamers for the bargain price of £330.

He's now trying to decide what to do with them ...

The West German World Cup squad have made a record as part of their "perks". One line in the song is a special farewell to manager Helmut Schoen, who retires in June. It goes: "The man at the top is going home, he takes our gratitude and our applause."



REPORTS from Europe have linked Ernst Happel, manager of FC Bruges and Holland, with Real Madrid.

They still remember Happel, an Austrian, in Madrid from 1956. He once scored a hat-trick for Rapid Vienna against Real and such things aren't forgotten in Spain.

WIM van Hanegem, who joined AZ '67 from Feyenoord, has just signed a five-year contract with the Alkmaar despite being 33. The Dutch international will play for two more years and then become a coach.

MULLER'S STILL TOPS

GERD MULLER may be 32, but the Bayern Munich captain is still the deadliest and most consistent scorer in Europe.

Once again he's the top scorer in West Germany with 22 goals after 27 games. Against Hamburger SV, Der Bomber converted his 51st Bundesliga penalty out of 61 attempts — it was his 354th goal in 401 League matches, his 27th against HSV.

★ ★ ★

In West Germany, since the Bundesliga was started 15 years ago there have been 159 games postponed, with Eintracht Braunschweig the worst hit — 19 matches called off.

★ ★ ★

VfB Stuttgart set a new attendance record last month. They beat Hertha Berlin's total of 745,167 fans at home games during a season and the newly-promoted Stuttgart have averaged just under 50,000 at their Neckars Stadium this season.

NEWS FLASHES

Sao Paulo are the new Brazilian Champions. They won the Brazil Cup by

beating Atletico Mineiro 4-3 on penalties in the play-off Final.

The USSR are increasing their First Division from 16 to 18 clubs next season. They have also taken drastic steps to promote brighter football. After a team has played eight games, no points will be awarded for a draw.

French President M. Valery Giscard D'Estaing has invited the national team to dinner.

Italy and Inter-Milan captain Giacinto Facchetti is now back in action after his leg injury at Wembley.

The secretary of Spanish club Sevilla has caused a sensation in the city by skipping the country! The authorities have seized the property he owns in Seville, but he's thought to be hiding somewhere in South America with about £800,000 of other people's money.

Which team do you support? Liverpool, Scotland, Manchester City, Celtic, Rangers, Aston Villa, Arsenal, Blackpool, Bristol City, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Cardiff City, Chelsea, Derby County, Everton, Heart of Midlothian, Stoke City, St Mirren, Sunderland, Partick Thistle, West Bromwich Albion, Wolverhampton Wanderers? ☐ Show your allegiance!

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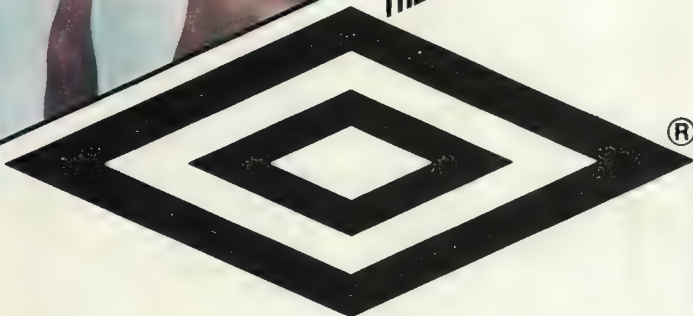
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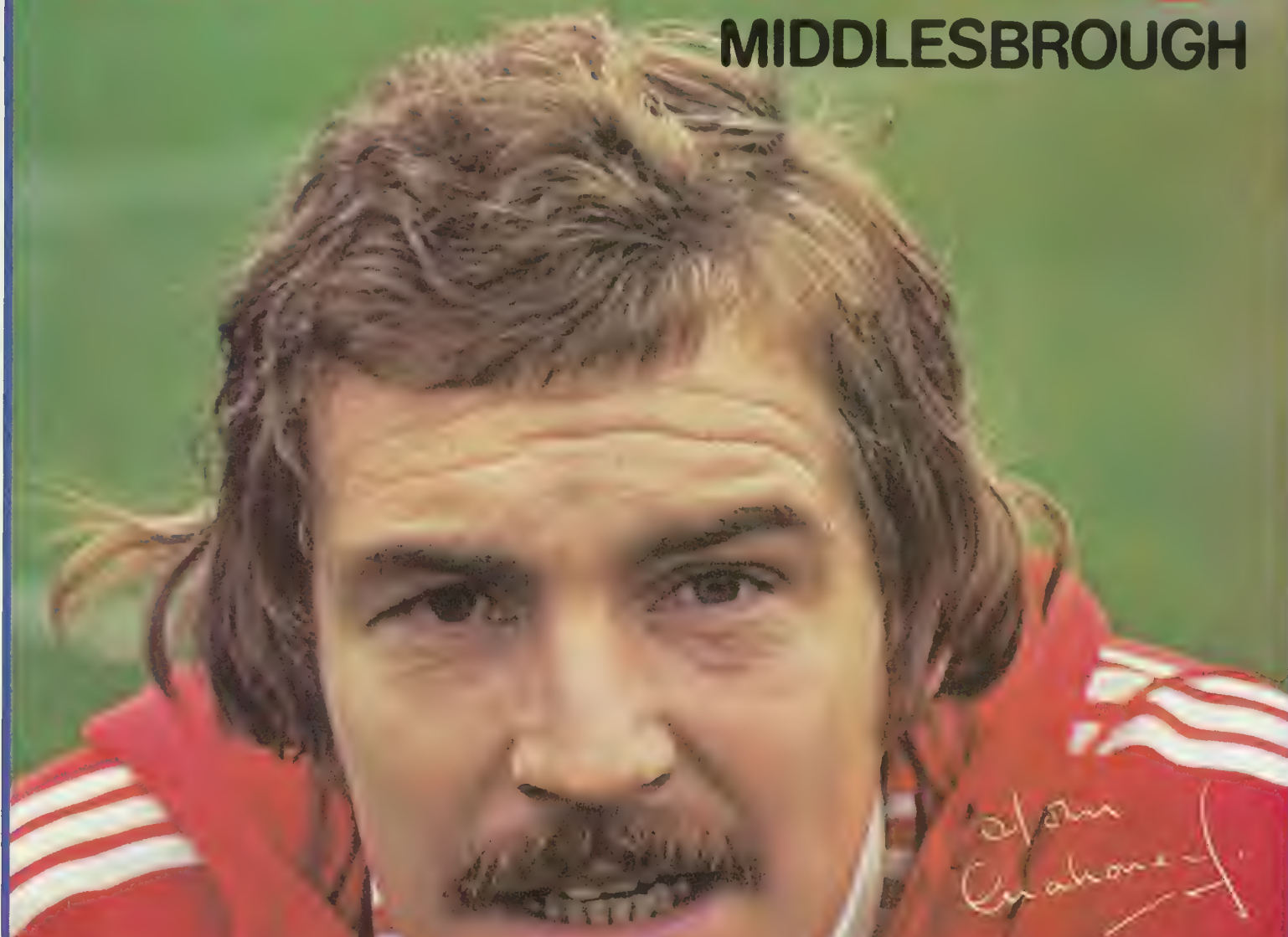


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John Mahoney

MIDDLESBROUGH



FULL NAME: John Mahoney
BIRTHPLACE: Cardiff, Wales
BIRTHDATE: 20th September, 1947
HEIGHT: 5ft 8ins
WEIGHT: 11st
PREVIOUS CLUBS: Crewe and Stoke City
MARRIED: Yes to Janet
CHILDREN: One daughter, Bethan
CAR: Lancia Beta
FAVOURITE PLAYER: Too many to name
FAVOURITE OTHER TEAMS: Stoke City and Wrexham
MOST DIFFICULT OPPONENT: Terry Yorath and Trevor Brooking
MOST MEMORABLE MATCH: Playing at Wembley for Wales in Jubilee year when we beat England

BIGGEST THRILL: Playing for Wales
BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT: Losing to Scotland at Liverpool (World Cup)
BEST COUNTRY VISITED: Greece and Ireland
FAVOURITE FOOD: Fish and chips
MISCELLANEOUS LIKES: Playing for Reading and sight-seeing in the countryside
MISCELLANEOUS DISLIKES: Hangers-on and certain M.P.'s
FAVOURITE TV SHOWS: Y Dydd and Panorama
FAVOURITE SINGERS: Treorchy & Rhos male voice choirs, Alan Stivell
FAVOURITE ACTORS /

ACTRESSES: Philip Madoc and Siân Phillips
BEST FRIEND: Terry Conroy of Stoke City
BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON CAREER: Myself
BIGGEST DRAG IN SOCCER: Waiting at airports
INTERNATIONAL HONOURS: Under-23 and full caps for Wales
PERSONAL AMBITION: To be happy in life
PROFESSIONAL AMBITION: To see Middlesbrough win a trophy
IF YOU WEREN'T A FOOTBALLER, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'D BE? No idea
WHICH PERSON IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? Nobody in particular

SHOOT!



Bristol City's Gary Collier (dark shirt) manages to block an effort by Aston Villa's Frank Carrodus.



West Ham's Alan Taylor (left) is stopped with a flying tackle by Newcastle's Irving Nattrass. The Hammers won 1-0 at Upton Park with a goal from Derek Hales.

FLYING TACKLES...



Martin O'Neill (number seven) of high-riding Forest is about to take a fall from a tackle by Colin Suggett of Norwich.

Tartan Talk

JOHN GREIG



'WE'LL K.O. DUNDEE UNITED AT HAMPDEN'

If you asked me which team I thought had some of the best young players in Britain today I would have to answer: Dundee United.

Let's take Graeme Payne for a start. What a player he will be when he gains a bit more experience. He reads the game superbly and is always involved in the action.

Another forward with fabulous potential is Paul Sturrock, who, possibly, hasn't scored as many goals as would have been expected from him this season.

At the back there is the ice-cool Davie Narey, who plays like a veteran although he is only around the 20-year-old mark. Okay, before you think I have changed my colours and become Dundee United's number two fan behind their manager Jim McLean I must hastily add we will beat them in Wednesday's Scottish Cup Semi-Final at Hampden.

It won't be easy, it never is against the Tannadice men, but we have the players bang in form to make sure there are no mistakes at Hampden. We are only 90 minutes away from yet another Final and no one is in any mood to slip up now.

There is a special magic about the Cup. It has an aura all of its own. It's a glamour tourney that takes your mind off the usual business of collecting precious League points every week.

Our last match in the Cup was against Kilmarnock and we really turned it on that day. Our form had been slipping until that game. We had beaten Motherwell 5-3 and then defeated the gallant Forfar 5-2 in the League Cup Semi-Final. We lost 3-0 to Aberdeen at Ibrox in a real shock result and that shows we conceded eight goals in three games. Certainly not the sort of record with which we want to be associated.

Kilmarnock are a very good side, even though they are in the First Division. Let's face it, they knocked

out holders Celtic in the previous round and that statistic speaks for itself.

Celtic may be going through a tough time of it, but they are never more dangerous than when they are down. They dearly wanted to hold on to that trophy, but Kilmarnock went to Parkhead and were within seven minutes of a 1-0 victory when Celtic equalised to force the game to a replay at Rugby Park.

Ironically, it was another goal

seven minutes from time which settled the tie. This time it was Kilmarnock's Derrick McDicken who was on target to give his side a shock 1-0 victory.

So, we all knew what to expect from our opponents. We never gave them a chance to settle, put a lot of pressure on World Cup squad goalkeeper Jim Stewart and eventually won 4-1.

Our man of the match that day was Johnny Hamilton . . . and it was his first game in the top side since last season's Scottish Cup Final! He replaced Bobby Russell, who was

ill, and showed just how strong this present pool of players is at Ibrox these days.

Now we have to dismiss Dundee United and their talented youngsters. I have already mentioned Payne, Sturrock and Narey, but they have other players who can do a really good job.

Paul Hegarty was named in Ally MacLeod's World Cup 40 and that shows how highly he is rated by the Scottish manager. Paul, originally a forward, has settled in well in the middle of the Tannadice defence and he is one of the best aerial experts in the game. His duels with Derek Johnstone should be a highlight of this match.

Another brilliant header of the ball is John Bourke, likely to lead their attack. Big John is doing the sort of role Andy Gray adopted at Tannadice before his transfer to Aston Villa and he is doing it well according to reports. We'll have to put a stop to that!

Goalkeeper Hamish McAlpine has earned the reputation as a real character, but he is also a first-rate player. He sets up attacks with intelligent throws and kicks and he too, must be watched carefully.

Okay, it won't be easy, but I reckon we will do it. I don't mind who we meet in the Final. We aren't afraid of anyone . . . we'll let them worry about us. First, though, we must send United packing and we are all looking forward to the tie. It should be a cracker.

Cheers for now . . .

John Greig

TARTAN TALK FROM
CELTIC'S DANNY
McGRAIN NEXT WEEK



Rangers' Alex Miller (left) in action against Dundee United during their 2-0 Premier Division win at Ibrox last December.

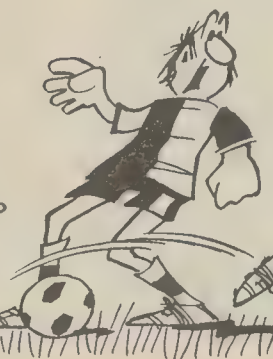
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WHY, IS HE A LAWYER OR SOMETHING?



WORSE THAN THAT — HE'S A DENTIST!



McNamara has won over the fans

TWO seasons ago Edinburgh was the centre for two transfers which the fans thought just would not work out. One player left the capital and another arrived and it looked bad moves for both the youngsters concerned.

Ralph Callaghan was the man who went South from Hearts to trouble-torn Newcastle United. He was bought for £80,000 without the consent of the then manager Richard Dinnis, who was sacked this season. Callaghan immediately dropped into the shadows.

The player who arrived was Celtic's Jackie McNamara when he joined Hibs. The fans weren't happy with the deal, but it wasn't because of their lack of belief in the ability of the versatile McNamara. They were upset that their great favourite and captain Pat Stanton was allowed to go to Parkhead in a straight swap deal.

There were chants of "Turnbull Must Go" directed at the Hibs manager. It was an unsettling time for McNamara, caught, by no fault of his own, in the middle of a raging controversy.

However, McNamara decided to show the fans what he could do and he set about trying to win them over with high class, efficient displays. Unfortunately, he suffered several injuries, but last season he came back and now he is one of the heroes of the Easter Road fans.

HE'S NOW A HIBS' HERO!



settled down in the sweeper's position after international John Blackley became another Edinburgh star to move to Newcastle.

McNamara started to play with a new confidence beside centre-half George Stewart. He tackled with conviction, challenged with tenacity and hit long balls to set up lightning counter-attacks.

"It was a wrench leaving Celtic," says McNamara, "but I wanted first team football."

"My form suffered and when the chance to join Hibs cropped up I didn't hesitate. They were my sort of club."

"And Mr. Turnbull is one of the most respected managers in soccer. I knew my game would be enhanced at Easter Road."

McNamara is ideally built for the role. He is speedy on the deck and covers the ground swiftly. However, he can also read the game superbly, anticipating the moves of his rivals.

It hasn't been an easy trip to the top for McNamara, but he deserves all the success that has come his way. It is difficult enough for a player to settle in with a new club, but McNamara's position was made even tougher when he had to replace a man of the class of Pat Stanton.

The player now has those fans firmly on his side. In fact, could you imagine the reaction of the Edinburgh fans now if they ever lost their popular defender!

Marinello misses big city glamour at Motherwell



WHILE a sound Arsenal side, without an out-and-out winger, attracts the crowds with distinct prospects of Wembley, PETER MARINELLO, the forgotten star, scampers down the flanks of Fir Park, Motherwell, in the only way he knows — taking on defenders. Out of the limelight maybe but the golden boy of the early 70's is still eager to show his artistry can be appreciated.

"I'm still the same sort of player but more experienced," he admitted. "I miss it all of course. The glamour and the big crowds. If I got the chance to go down again to a good English club, yes, I'd go all right. As a professional you must consider all points and it is a short career."

Marinello, 28, and to many the sad victim of a successful Highbury system which couldn't incorporate his direct style or he adapt to theirs, now displays his considerable tricky talents to low Scottish Premier Division crowds and for his new manager, ex-Palace, Birmingham and Walsall pivot, Roger Hynd.

"We're all full-timers here and the side is doing well," says Peter, transferred to Motherwell from Portsmouth for £35,000 in December, 1975. "I play wide on either wing and mainly have a free role. There are possibly more individual players up here and the fans, I think, get value for their money. Our gates have improved a wee bit but the average is still only around the 5,000 mark."

"Crowds up here are more critical. They see more wingers and automatically expect you to beat the man and get the ball across. Down South they have more full-time coaches and are more aware of tactics. There is a slow patient build-up and the winger is appreciated and encouraged more I think."

In early 1970, amidst a barrage of publicity, Marinello, the £100,000 signing from Hibernian, was launched on the London scene billed as the

new George Best. The comparisons were inevitable; good looks allied to sporting skill. But he never established a regular spot and moved three seasons later to Portsmouth.

He recalls: "Arsenal were very good to me, though. I didn't think I got a fair chance but I've always thought I did well. They had Georgie Armstrong doing two jobs and playing naturally deeper. He had enormous stamina and the side, basically, a 4-4-2 formation, kept on winning. I think they used only around 13 or so players."

"I tried to change to suit their style but it didn't work. Looking back, perhaps if when I came down I had joined another side, say for instance, Tottenham, their play may have suited me better. Funny, most clubs now go for wingers."

"I then got a good offer to join Pompey, potentially a great club with a very loyal following but we didn't hit it off. We were always struggling and the club, with some big names on the staff, was desperate for cash. In the end I had to go. I suppose my fee from Motherwell helped them."

Today, Peter Marinello has settled back in Edinburgh with his wife, Joyce and sons Paul (five) and John (one) and he still keeps in touch with former mates, George Graham, Eddie Kelly and Frank McLintock. "In fact, Eddie is godfather to one of the boys," he says.

Though plans for a mid-season football break in Australia were dashed by former manager Willie McLean, Peter is awaiting confirmation to play in America this summer.

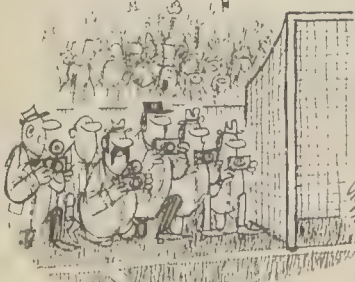
And those days of fame, newspaper columns, modelling, Pinta-milk adverts and films? "...In a way I was exploited," he agrees. "I was always chasing around. But I was young, enjoyed it and made a few bob." And spare time now? "I had plans to open a pub but it fell through. I just play tennis."

FOOTBALL FUNNIES

This week Cambridge United's ALAN BILEY selects the jokes specially drawn by our cartoonist Styx.



"I've only gotta look at that guy and he books me"



"My goodness — what a tough, rough, bruising game it's turned out to be, ref"



"Now go out there, son and make Johan Cruyff look like an amateur"



"Well, as I was taking a corner — I caught sight of this beautiful blonde in the crowd"



"I can see now why he's been transferred by so many clubs. Phew, HIS feet!"

Wolves' midfielder Kenny Hibbitt's message for a section of the Molineux fans . . .

'IF YOU CAN'T CHEER US ON, STAY AWAY'

HIBBITT and his team-mates are sick and tired of constant criticism — particularly at home — from so-called supporters.

"It's incredible," said Ken. "I know everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, but these people who call themselves supporters just don't seem to care."

"They come to our games and don't even watch what's happening. From the kick-off all they seem to want to do is criticise."

"They take great delight in shouting abuse at players who are, after all, giving 100 per cent even if things aren't going particularly well."

"And if we're having a rough time that's the last thing we need. What we want from the supporters in times like these is encouragement, not abuse."

"I must admit it gets us down and it's especially sickening because it always happens at Molineux."

"Since I fractured an ankle against Norwich in early March, I watch the games from the stand."

"I couldn't believe what was going on. The least little mistake and there was a torrent of abuse directed at the players. In fact, a number of people seemed to be waiting for something to happen just so they could shout the odds."

"I had to bite my lip a couple of times to prevent me from saying something I might have regretted later."

"Let me make it clear, though, that it's not all our fans obviously. There are thousands of decent supporters who if they criticise at all, they're just trying to be constructive. And our travelling supporters who follow us to away matches are marvellous."

"But, really, as far as I'm concerned, we could do without those other so-called supporters."

That's not the only reason, of course, but it could certainly be a factor in Wolves' somewhat inconsistent home performances this season.

But Ken's blast at the fans doesn't end there.

"While I'm getting all this off my chest there is one other thing I'm fed up about . . . the constant harping back to the 'good old days' at Molineux."

"Whenever the lads go to functions all we seem to hear about is how great players like Billy Wright and Stan Cullis were. People come up to us and ask why we're not as



good as them, and why can't we play like Wolves teams used to and things like that."

"They keep comparing the old teams with the present-day side — and while we all respect the players from these eras as much as anyone we get tired of having their names rammed down our throats at every opportunity."

Yet it's the success of these teams from yesteryear that Kenny and the rest of the Wolves side must try to emulate.

"We have as much ambition as anyone. But you have to remember this is our first season back in the top Division. And whatever anyone else says, I believe you need time to settle back at the top."

"There's a world of difference between the football in the First and Second Divisions and we have taken time to adjust."

"We've proved often enough this season we have the makings of a very good side, and once youngsters like Bob Hazell — what a prospect he is — and Martin Patching get more experience we'll do well I'm sure."

'EURO LESSONS VILLA MUST LEARN'



"Close-marked by Gordon of Gornik at Villa Park."

IT'S one thing to be knocked out of Europe, but it was very disappointing to lose in Barcelona playing what manager Ron Saunders described as "our best football of the season."

I didn't make the trip to Barcelona. Coming back after my knee ligaments injury, I sustained a thigh strain in my right leg. I tried to use my right peg instead of my favoured, but weaker, left — obviously it wasn't used to all the work! Ironically, had the U.E.F.A. Cup-tie been played a couple of days later I could have made it. Still, I never really thought I'd be back in time . . . I only half-hoped.

I stayed in Birmingham for treatment and listened to the match on local radio. I'm a bad spectator anyway, so being forced to follow the action via the radio was even worse!

I was on the edge of my seat urging the lads on. My heart sank when John Gidman was sent-off, although my hopes were raised when Brian Little put us in front.

However, playing with only ten men in the Nou Camp Stadium in front of 80,000 Barcelona fans is asking a lot of any side and eventually the extra man for Barcelona proved telling.

I had a long chat with most of the boys when they returned and they reckon that had it not been for Giddy's sending-off we'd have made it. In the end, playing with a man less told on their stamina and the Spaniards won the tie with goals towards the end of the game.

Obviously I didn't see the incident where Giddy was shown the red card. I gather he lashed out at de la Cruz, and with 99 per cent of

SHORT PASSES

● Len Shackleton played 384 League games between 1946 and 1957 (seven for Bradford, 57 for Newcastle, 320 for Sunderland).

(CLIVE LEE, Sunderland)

● Queen's Park, founded in 1867, are Scotland's oldest League club.

(KENNETH SNELL, St. Devon)

● The national colours of Saudi Arabia are green jerseys, white shorts, and green stockings.

(HUGH WRIGHT, Edinburgh)

● Real Madrid have won the Spanish League 17 times, and the Spanish Cup 13 times.

(K. J. HAMMOND, Rugby)

● Biggest Football League gate is 83,260 (Manchester Utd. v. Arsenal, played at Maine Road on 17th January, 1948).

(JONATHAN LION, Newcastle)

Goal-filler!

Is it true Chelsea once had a goalkeeper weighing more than 20 stone?

CHRISTOPHER ROSE, PLYMOUTH

● Certainly is, Christopher. Billy Foulke — not surprisingly nicknamed "Fatty" Foulke — actually reached a massive 25 stone by the time he finished his career with Bradford City.

But the 6ft. 3ins. giant was nobody's fool as a 'keeper — and, before Chelsea signed him from Sheffield United in 1905, he'd won an England cap and a couple of F.A. Cup-winners' medals.

With his amazing agility for such bulk, his powerful punch which could clear the ball to the halfway line, and his way of picking up the ball in one huge hand, Foulke was a tremendously popular

character wherever he played — especially at Chelsea, where he tipped the scales at a pound or two more than his two full-backs weighed together!

First for Rams

Can you tell me the score in Derby County's first-ever League game?

IAN JOHNSON, HULL

● It was on the Football League's first-ever Saturday, too, Ian — 8th September, 1888.

Derby won 6-3 at Bolton — and then a week later, in their first home game, lost 1-5 to West Bromwich.

Which just goes to show that "form" was just as unpredictable then as it is now — plus a few more goals for good measure!

the fans urging for John to be sent-off, the ref had little alternative.

Giddy was fined by the boss afterwards. The manager doesn't always do this, but no doubt he felt John was experienced enough to have known better.

I sympathise with John, having been shown the red card playing for Scotland in Czechoslovakia, and in my case the punishment was even worse. I was suspended for our remaining World Cup-ties. No one had a go at Giddy. It would have been unnecessary, and as far as we're concerned the matter is now forgotten.

I wasn't over-impressed with Barcelona at Villa Park. We were awful that night and it's not sour grapes. Villa simply didn't put it together.

I felt Barcelona were better than us in experience and that's about all. Mind you, in Europe that's a big "all".

Johan Cruyff showed his full range of skills at times. He drifted in and out of the game, popping up at right-back, midfield and in attack. Maybe after 13 years of being kicked around that's how he approaches the game.

Mind you, when he WAS in the match he really made his presence felt, scoring one goal and narrowly missing another.

I felt we could still win the tie even in Barcelona and it was sickening to go out of Europe playing such good football.

Even so, it's been a satisfying European campaign for Villa because for most of us it was a new experience. When we return — and I hope it's soon — we'll be much better prepared.

It's a different world playing against the Continentals. You have to prepare for games very thoroughly and must be tactically

aware of all possibilities.

Villa must also learn about gamesmanship. Like it or loathe it, it's part and parcel of Euro soccer.

You can't give these Europeans an inch. When Giddy lashed out at the Barcelona player, he didn't connect, but the guy apparently fell all over the place in "agony". This must have influenced the referee and as soon as the red card was shown de la Cruz made a remarkable recovery.

With around two months of the season left, what are Villa's plans?

We must aim to get as many men fit as possible and work towards a settled side with one eye on next season. It would be nice to end 1977/78 on a high note and a few wins soon improves your League position.

From my point of view, I was delighted to be included in the preliminary squad of 40 by Scotland manager Ally MacLeod for Argentina.

He's going to have a very difficult task whittling that down to 22 and there will be some very classy players not making the trip.

Every one of the 40 will be thinking about the World Cup Finals most of the time. People won't let us forget it! However, our priorities now are to our clubs and it is at this level we must show our form to be picked for our country.

Going back to Villa, I've been encouraged by the form of several "new faces". John Gregory has proved an excellent buy from Northampton and has served us well in two or three different roles.

Given a few years, I think John will settle down to become a very steady back-four man.

Our two Evanses — Allan and David — have come through well. Allan has made a name for himself in attack, although I feel he will eventually be a centre-half. He's played up-front mainly because of injuries.

Young David had the daunting task of making his debut against Barcelona, and gave a promising performance. It will boost his confidence to know he's in Ron Saunders' plans.

My tip for the top — Gordon Cowans — has played fairly regularly, and if ever a kid was going to make it, he's Gordon. His vision and passing ability will surely make him a midfielder of distinction.

My pal Gordon Smith is playing some great football at left-back these days. Smudger had a few problems when he first came down from St. Johnstone, but now he's probably our most consistent member.

This Saturday (April 1st) we meet Liverpool and perhaps we can have the rare distinction of being a team to do the "double" over The Reds. We won at Anfield — and while last season's results mean nothing now, it's nice to know we hammered them 5-1 at Villa Park.

I am writing this before their European Cup Semi-Final first-leg tie against Borussia Monchengladbach, although I fancy Liverpool to retain their trophy. They seem to have got this far without being stretched. There are only a handful of truly outstanding sides in the European Cup but now, down to the last four, there are no easy games.

See you in a fortnight,

Andy Gray



"Defeat in Barcelona (above) while (right) Cruyff celebrates his goal in the first-leg."



ANDY GRAY
writes for you

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Twice lucky

Has any club ever won the F.A. Cup two seasons in succession?

MARK NOCTOR, CUMBRIA.

● Before the turn of the century, when competition was much less fierce, it was by no means uncommon. Mark Wanderers (1876, 1877, and 1878), and Blackburn Rovers (1884, 1885, 1886), actually managed it three years on the trot.

Wanderers also won successively in 1872 and 1873, and Rovers in 1890 and 1891.

Since then, though, the only clubs to have retained the Cup won twelve months previously have been Newcastle (1951 and 1952), and Spurs (1961 and 1962).

Frank Sibley

What was the playing-career of Q.P.R. manager Frank Sibley?

ALAN COOPER, ENFIELD

● Sibley joined Rangers, as a 14-year-old schoolboy, in 1962. Alan — and made his debut in a League Cup-tie at Aldershot on 4th September, 1963.

He was ever-present in the side which won promotion to the Second Division, and the League Cup, in 1966-67.

Sibley — who skippered the England Youth team in 1965-66 — was a Rangers regular until a persistent knee injury unfortunately brought his playing career to a premature close in 1972.

Staying on at Q.P.R., he was coach and then assistant-manager before taking over from Dave Sexton last July.

Olympic class

Please settle an argument with my dad — did Great Britain once win the Olympic Games football tournament?

BILLY FURMEDGE, LIVERPOOL

● Not just once, but twice they did it. Billy — back in the days when all competing teams were genuine amateurs.

Britain took the football Gold Medal in both 1908 (in London) and 1912 (Stockholm), beating Denmark in the Final each time — by 2-0 and 4-2.

Our Expert would like to point out that although all letters are read, he can only reply to published questions because of shortage of time

TAKE A BREAK—IT'S QUIZ TIME

1. The transfer deadline was met recently. The following players were sold on that day. Their former clubs are in brackets... can you name their new ones? (a) Bill Rafferty (Carlisle), (b) David Kemp (Portsmouth), (c) John Burridge (Aston Villa) and (d) Alan Gowling (Newcastle).

2. Which two clubs contested the 1974-75 Scottish Cup Final?

3. Scunthorpe United, Stockport County or Southport amalgamated with Lindsey United to be known as they are today?

4. On Saturday, March 11th, both Ron Harris and Peter Bonetti (right) reached a personal milestone. The pair played their 600th, 700th or 800th first team appearance for Chelsea against Derby County at the Baseball Ground?

5. Can you name the four clubs that reached the F.A. Cup Semi-Finals?

6. The Quarter-Finals of the Scottish Cup was played on the same



day. Which First Division club held Aberdeen to a 2-2 draw at Pittodrie.

7. Can you name the man Birmingham recently appointed as their manager to replace Sir Alf Ramsey who resigned a few weeks ago?

8. This former Scotland international has played for Cowdenbeath, St. Mirren, Tottenham, Arsenal, Ipswich Town and Stoke City. This term he has played in the Third Division with Walsall. Can you identify him?

9. Which two present-day clubs would be playing against each other if Singers F.C. met Riverside?

10. Study the action photograph (left) taken during the West Ham and Watford F.A. Cup Third Round game and see if you can answer the following questions. (a) Can you name the West Ham player on the right, (b) what was the final result, (c) where was the game played?

11. Can you select the correct month when the following managers were appointed by their clubs? (a) Dave Sexton (Man-

chester United — July, August, September, 1977), (b) Lawrie McMenemy (Southampton — October, November, December, 1973), (c) Billy Bingham (Mansfield Town — January, February, March, 1978), (d) Bob Paisley (Liverpool — August, September, October, 1974).

12. Which clubs headed the First, Second, Third, Fourth and Scottish Premier Divisions after the League programme played on Saturday, March 18th?

13. Aston Villa travelled to Spain to face Barcelona in the second-leg of the U.E.F.A. Cup Quarter Finals recently. After a 2-2 draw at Villa Park, the Midland club lost the return 2-1, 3-1 or 4-1?

14. True or false? Forfar Athletic have played one season in the Scottish Premier Division.

15. Non-League Bangor City reached the Welsh Cup Final when they beat which Third Division club 4-2?



ANSWERS:

1. (a) Wolves, (b) Carlisle, (c) Crystal Palace, (d) Bolton, 2. Celtic and Aldershot, 3. Scunthorpe United, 4. Ipswich, 5. West Brom, 6. Arsenal, 7. Jimmy Robertson, 8. Coventry and City, 9. (a) Trevor Brooking, (b) 1-0 to West Ham, (c) Upton Park, 10. (a) July, (b) November, (c) February, (d) August, 11. (a) Jim Smith, 12. Jimmy Robertson, 13. (a) Tottenham, (b) Arsenal, (c) Ipswich, (d) Watford, 14. (a) Tottenham, (b) Arsenal, (c) Ipswich, (d) Watford, 15. Never played in the Premier.

GO FOR THE DOUBLE ANSWERS

ACROSS: (1) Forfar, (6) Arm, (8) Area, (9) East, (11) Snap, (13) Us, (14) Ema, (16) Gannons, (17) Dulcet, (19) Go, (20) Sty, (21) Eleven, (24) St, (25) No, (27) Ara, (28) Aid, (29) Glide, (31) Dances, (34) Any, (35) Pin, (37) Holland, (38) To.

DOWN: (1) Farad, (2) Or, (3) Result, (4) Fen, (5) Repute, (6) At, (7) Messon, (10) Sunderland, (12) Age, (13) Urge, (15) Must, (18) Cynical, (22) Lag, (23) Vein, (24) Sad, (26) Ode, (28) An, (30) Dyet, (32) Ash, (33) Spa, (36) In.

Jumbled Name: ARCHIE GEMMILL

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The most-improved players of the season...



GERRY GOW (Bristol City)



WILLIE YOUNG (Arsenal)



JOE CORRIGAN (Man. City)

BETTER THAN EVER!

IT'S always good to see a player who's had his trying times with a club fighting back to win the applause of the fans.

This season there have been several examples of determination winning through and players enjoying their best-ever seasons.

Two of the game's most towering talents typify what we mean — Micky Droy and Willie Young.

Last season the 6ft 5ins Droy was on the verge of leaving Chelsea, his only League club, for Charlton. He had lost his place at Stamford Bridge to young Steve Wicks and the future seemed bleak.

But Micky set that famous jutting jaw and buckled down to the task of winning back his place. That he has done so successfully, that alongside young Wicks he now forms one of the most formidable barriers in the First Division.

Now Ron Greenwood is a regular visitor at Chelsea, assessing Droy's form with a view to accommodating him in England's future plans — a remarkable transformation in fortunes.

Across in North London the Arsenal fans have found themselves a new folk hero.

When Willie Young arrived from deadly enemies Spurs he brought with him an unwanted tag of being somewhat clumsy and cumbersome.

But now all that has changed.

With Arsenal's vastly improved form Willie has become a commanding figure alongside young David O'Leary, and is the new pin-up boy of the North Bank.

The first few months weren't easy for the giant Scot either, as he struggled in an Arsenal side bereft of confidence.

The similarity of the situations on either side of London is too obvious to miss.

There was a time when John McGovern was the whipping boy of the crowd.

At both Derby and Leeds he knew what it was like to be booed by the fans, and even this season at Forest when the club made such a spectacular start to their new First Division career, he was given the bird.

Now even the most critical Forest fan has come to accept what a vital, integral part of the team McGovern represents. His form has been a revelation, and he must take much of the credit for the remarkable fairy story that is Forest.

Always a player's player rather than the sort to try and win the adoration of the fans, John has tremendous enthusiasm for the game, and inspiring qualities of leadership. This has been by far his most rewarding season.

One of the most-improved teams of the season are Norwich City. Week after week the general

public, remembering Norwich's past failings, rather than their current commitment, waited for them to slip up, but John Bond's side have kept plugging away and draws on the grounds of Forest, Leeds, Derby and Arsenal only go to show just how they have progressed.

Typifying that improvement are defenders Tony Powell and David Jones.

John Bond knew both well as they were with him during those good old days at Bournemouth, and although it took both a while to settle to the different demands of the First Division, they have come through the ordeal well, and now form the backbone of a much steadier defence at Carrow Road.

Another often unsung hero who is enjoying himself immensely in the First Division is Bristol City's Gerry Gow.

A great club man Gerry was strongly instrumental in City's successful bid, after several seasons, to get out of the Second Division.

In their first term of First Division football at Ashton Gate, the emphasis was naturally on survival and consolidation.

Now, since the arrival of high-calibre players like Norman Hunter, Peter Cormack and Joe Royle, City may feel they have a little more breathing space, and Gerry's recent form has been an eye-opener.

The most-improved goalkeepers in the First Division are Manchester City's Joe Corrigan, George Wood (Everton) and Jim Blyth (Coventry).

Blyth edged Wood out of the Scotland World Cup party of 40. He was helped by a widely televised super show against Liverpool in a League game, which included a penalty save from England's Phil Neal.

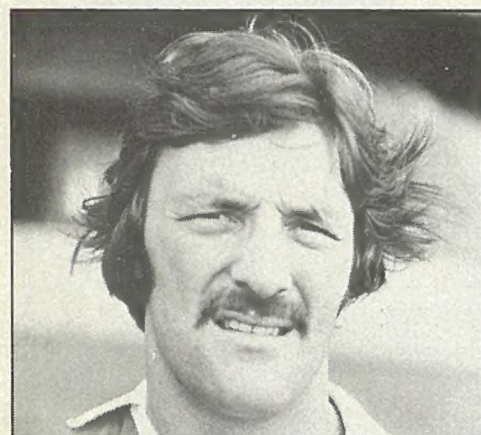
But Wood has made a colossal impression at Everton since his arrival from Blackpool, and he recently turned on an equally brilliant display against Manchester City.

As for Corrigan he really goes from strength to strength, and his new-found form was probably best summed up by Allan Clarke of Leeds.

"I always reckoned I was good for at least one goal a season when we played Manchester City — because of Joe — now I rate it a great personal achievement to beat him," he said.

The list of improved players would take up the whole of SHOOT, but into this category we reckon that also worth a mention are Mike Flanagan (Charlton Athletic), Gordon Smith (Aston Villa), David Price (Arsenal), Mark Wallington (Leicester City) and Steve Taylor (Oldham Athletic).

To all of them — well done.



MICKY DROY (Chelsea)



JOHN MCGOVERN (Nottm. Forest)



DAVID JONES (Norwich City)

DENNIS ROFE
Leicester City



SHOOT!